

THE END OF THE WORLD, ANTICHRIST, AND THE  
FINAL CONVERSION OF THE JEWS IN THE  
*FORTALITUM FIDEI* OF FRIAR ALONSO  
DE ESPINA (d. 1464)

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The coming of the final events of world history preoccupied mendicant writing and preaching since the middle of the thirteenth century, but the fifteenth century witnessed an even larger number of mendicant preachers and writers who announced the coming of Antichrist and the end of the present age. Friars such as Dominicans Vincent Ferrer (ca. 1350-1419) and Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98) and the Franciscan Bernardine of Siena (1380-1444) expected the imminent arrival of Antichrist and propagated apocalyptic thought into the late medieval and Renaissance periods.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of their differing opinions on the Parousia, they all intended to awaken in their readers and listeners the need for conversion, reform, and renewal in their lives. They did this with themes of “the imminence of the coming of Antichrist, the terrors of the impending *dies irae*, and the awful finalities of the Last Judgment.”<sup>2</sup>

These prophecies contemplated not only the destiny of the Christian community but also the fate of those outside the church, especially the Jews. According to Saint Paul’s prediction in Romans 11:25-26, their final conversion was “a necessary part of the final drama that would free suffering, confessing Christians from the bonds of a sinful world.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Other fifteenth-century friars include the Dominican Manfred of Vercelli (d. 1431) and the Franciscans Michele da Carcano (d. 1484), Roberto Caracciolo of Lecce (1425-95), and Blessed Amadeus of Portugal (Joannes Menesius de Silva) (1431-82). There are now numerous works that have been published recently on the Franciscans and the apocalyptic movement. See especially E. Randolph Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission in the High Middle Ages* (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 1992); and David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); and Burr, *Olivi’s Peaceable Kingdom: A Reading of the Apocalypse Commentary* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> Francis Oakley, *The Western Church in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979), 262.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Colin Gow, *The Red Jews: Antisemitism in an Apocalyptic Age, 1200-1600* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 1.

This final conversion of the Jews appears in many sermons and writings, along with the subsequent conversion of the “nations,” as the principal sign of the last days.

In this essay, I treat the apocalyptic thought of the friars about the Jews, especially as it appears in the work of the fifteenth-century Franciscan Alonso de Espina (d. ca. 1464).<sup>4</sup> We should address Alonso’s work because he both struck a balance between the sophisticated theological perspectives and traditional apocalyptic ideas disseminated by Franciscans and other mendicants and also greatly influenced subsequent theological reflection on the Christian approach to Jews and Judaism concerning the end times.<sup>5</sup>

This article will describe the treatment of the Jews in apocalyptic thought in Franciscan writings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and then examine the context in which Alonso’s apocalyptic thought emerges especially in Franciscan Joachism. Alonso’s claims regarding this apocalyptic scenario will be followed by a discussion of the alleged involvement of the Jews with Antichrist and their expected conversion to Christianity. Finally, the essay will conclude with an evaluation of Alonso’s place in the Franciscan apocalyptic tradition.

### *Alonso de Espina: Life and Work*

Alonso de Espina is primarily known for his authorship of the  *Fortalitium Fidei*  (*Fortress of Faith*). Beyond that, we know him as an itinerant Crusade preacher, a confessor to Alvaro de Luna and King Enrique IV of Castile

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<sup>4</sup> On Alonso de Espina, see Alisa Meyühas Ginio, *La forteresse de la foi: La vision du monde d’Alonso de Espina, moine espagnol (?-1466)* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1998); Ginio, *De bello iudaorum: Fray Alonso de Espina y su “Fortalitium fidei,”* *Fontes Iudaorum Regni Castellae*, no. 8 (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1998); Ana Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude towards Muslims in Fifteenth Century Spain* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999); and Steven J. McMichael, *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah? Alphonso de Espina’s Argument against the Jews in the “Fortalitium Fidei” (c. 1464)* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> This claim is confirmed by the words of Andrew Gow: “Anti-Judaic religious positions, anti-Semitic literary traditions and apocalyptic expectation coalesce here to form a particularly lucid vision of Jewish participation in the destructive reign of Antichrist. Between the moralizing, allegorizing position of high theology (which in this case always means Jerome and Augustine, cited in some variation) and the solidly traditional, unsophisticated encyclopedism of our vernacular texts, Espina occupies a middle ground, providing contemporary and subsequent Latinate readers of ‘applied theology’ with what would become—during the decades of especially vigorous anti-Semitic agitation that followed—a popular and well-harmonized guidebook to the ‘Jewish peril’ in the Last Days.” *The Red Jews*, 124-25.

(1454-74), and a proponent of the Spanish Inquisition.<sup>6</sup> There are five extant *Fortalitium Fidei* manuscripts, one of which is found in the Cathedral Library of El Burgo de Osma, dated 1464, and four in the Bibliothèque Royale Albert I (MSS 156-57, II. 83, 7497, 9524). There are also at least nine different incunabula and sixteenth-century printed editions, including the works of Johann Mentelin (Strasbourg, 1471), B. Richel (Basel, 1475), Guillaume Balsarin (Lyon, 1487), Anton Koberger

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<sup>6</sup> Alonso is credited with preaching in the town of Esgueva in 1450 and 1454. Some of his sermons must have been published during his lifetime, because he tells his readers at one point in the *Fortalitium Fidei*: "If you want to see many other most remarkable things about this most glorious name, look at the twenty-two sermons which I gave elsewhere in consideration of his honor upon the theme: His name is Jesus." The Latin text reads: "Si plura alia singularissima vis videre de hoc gloriosissimo nomine vide in viginti duobus sermonibus quos alias feci ob eius honorem super themate est nomen eius Jesus." Fol. XLIIIv. All citations from the Latin text of the *Fortalitium Fidei* come from the 1494 Koberger incunabulum edition and the 1464 manuscript from the Cathedral Library of El Burgo de Osma.

This series of sermons was given by Alonso in 1454 at Valladolid. Alonso speaks another time about preaching on the Christian faith at Medina del Campo in 1459. Another time he preached twenty-two sermons on the name of Jesus at the Church of Saint Nicholas in Valladolid, which was located near the Jewish quarter. He states that he preached before the whole town and also before many Jews. In addition, Alonso was a preacher of the Crusades for the Iberian Peninsula in Palencia in 1457. We see, therefore, that Alonso had much practical experience in the art of preaching and would know what sort of material to collect for a resource book for preachers—not a preaching manual—which is what the *Fortalitium Fidei* ultimately is. Alonso incorporated a discussion of preaching in the context of all other things he was going to say in his text into Book I. On fifteenth-century mendicant preaching, see Francisco Javier Rojo Alique, "El convento de San Francisco de Valladolid en la Edad Media (h. 1220-1518). III," *Archivo Ibero-Americano* (forthcoming, 2006); and Adeline Rucquoi, *Valladolid en la Edad Media, II: El mundo abreviado (1367-1474)* (Valladolid: Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1987), 372-77.

On Alonso's life, personality, and work, see Ben Zion Netanyahu, "Alonso de Espina: Was He a New Christian?" *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 43 (1976): 107-65; Lukyn Williams, *Adversus Judaeos: A Bird's-eye View of Christian Apologiae [to the Jews] until the Renaissance* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 277-80; Ginio, "The Conversos and the Magic Arts in Alonso de Espina's 'Fortalitium Fidei,'" *Mediterranean Historical Review* 5, no. 2 (1990): 169-82; Mario Esposito, "Notes sur le 'Fortalitium Fidei' d'Alphonse de Spina," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 43 (1948): 514-36; Esposito, "Une secte d'hérétiques à Medina del Campo en 1459: D'après le 'Fortalitium Fidei' d'Alphonse de Spina," *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* 32 (1936): 350-60; Atanasio López, "Descripción de los manuscritos franciscanos existentes en la biblioteca provincial de Toledo," *Archivo Ibero-Americano* 25 (1926): 334-81; John Edwards, "Fifteenth-Century Franciscan Reform and the Spanish Conversos: The Case of Fray Alonso de Espina," in *Monastic Studies. The Continuity of Tradition*, ed. Judith Loades (Bangor, Maine: Headstart History, 1990), 203-10; McMichael, *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah?*, 1-6; and McMichael, "The Sources for Alfonso de Espina's Messianic Argument Against the Jews in the *Fortalitium Fidei*," in *Iberia and the Mediterranean World of the Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Robert I. Burns*, S.J., ed. Larry J. Simon (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 72-95.

(Nuremberg, 1494), Johannes de Romoys (Lyon, 1511), and Per Johanne Meylin de Chambray (Lyon) 1525.<sup>7</sup> The wide circulation of this text reveals that many Christian writers found within these important pages a vast compendium of preaching material.<sup>8</sup>

Written as a defense against all enemies of the Church—heretics (Book II), Jews (Book III), Muslims (Book IV), and demons and witches (Book V)—Alonso assembled one of the most copious apologetic texts in Christian history and one of the most encyclopedic texts within the Christian anti-Jewish literary tradition. In fact, there is no other work

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<sup>7</sup> Most of the extant texts of the  *Fortalitium Fidei*  are listed in  *Biblioteca Biblica Ibérica Medieval* , ed. Klaus Reinhardt and Horacio Santiago-Oter (Madrid: C.S.I.C., 1986), 63–64. Another manuscript exists in Vienna, but it is only an abbreviated form of the text; in fact, it contains only one-fifth of the original work, and the entire Book IV is missing. *Ibid.*, 63. The text is listed in the following way: “Wien[,] BN lat. 4045 (Univ. 557) (xv) fol. 108r–145v.” The text was translated into French, German, and Italian in the first half of the sixteenth century. There are a few extant copies of the French translation, but unfortunately the Italian text cannot be found and only a very small portion of the German translation has survived. In the German translation, only several lines remain of Book III, chap. 9, “Tertia expulsio Judeorum.” Two editions of the  *Fortalitium Fidei*  can be found online at <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com>.

<sup>8</sup> On the issue of the influence of Alonso on subsequent anti-Jewish history, Shlomo Simonsohn points out that one of the main sources for the  *Consilium contra Judaeos*  of famous anti-Judaic preacher friar Bernardino de Bustis (ca. 1450–1515) was Alonso’s text: “The mainstay of de Bustis’ thesis was the alleged wickedness of the Jews. To make this point he relied on the  *Fortalitium Fidei*  of Alfonso de Espina, which by then had found special favour with the adversaries of the Jews and the opponents of their continued presence in Christian society.”  *The Apostolic See and the Jews: History*  (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1991), 331. Simonsohn points out that Bernardino was a disciple of “the ardent enemy of the Jews,” Michele da Carcano, who was himself a disciple of Friar Giovanni de Capistrano, another anti-Judaic preacher. On this same point, another scholar reports that Alonso was also a source for an anti-Jewish sermon delivered before Bernardino wrote the  *Consilium* : “Il  *Consilium*  venne pubblicato a seguito di una predica—l’unica di Bernardino su questo argomento—dal titolo  *De reprobatione secte pagani, Mahumeti et iudei* . Già dal titolo è dunque evidente come ormai il problema ebraico venisse assimilato a quello di altre minoranze, seguendo così la strada tracciata dalla controversistica spagnola, ed in particolare da Alfonso de Spina, il cui  *Fortalitium Fidei* —citato dallo stesso Bernardino—ha appunto per sottotitolo ‘contro gli ebrei, gli eretici, i demoni, i maomettani.’” Quoted in Anna Antoniazzi Villa, “A Proposito di Ebrei, Francescani, Monti di Pietà: Bernardino de Bustis e la polemica antiebraica nella Milano di fine ‘400,” in  *Il Francescanesimo in Lombardia: Storia e Arte*  (Milan: Silvana, 1983), 51. The  *Fortalitium Fidei*  was a source for a sixteenth-century Jewish text. See Samuel Usque’s  *Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel* , trans. Martin A. Cohen (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1965). The material that Usque borrowed from Alonso de Espina is interpreted in a totally different way, naturally, from the intent of the original author. That is, Usque interpreted the trials and tribulations of the Jews as a temporary punishment for Israel’s infraction of its covenant with God. He believed that the Jews of his day—in sixteenth-century Spain and Portugal—were about to experience God’s mercy through a new era of restoration and peace. I wish to thank Adam Shear of the University of Pennsylvania for this reference.

as comprehensive in its argumentation against the Jews. This is especially evident from Book III of the *Fortalitium Fidei*, whose twelve chapters form a compendium of Christian polemical issues with the Jewish faith and religion. The chapters can be grouped into four areas: (1) the theological issues (chaps. 1-5, 12), in which Alonso proves the truth and superiority of Christianity over Judaism based on his reading of the Old and New Testaments; (2) philosophical/theological issues (chap. 6), in which Alonso answers the Jewish objections to the incarnation and virgin birth of Jesus Christ, the Eucharist (in particular, the doctrine of transubstantiation), the doctrine of original sin, and the salvation of the human race through Jesus' death and resurrection;<sup>9</sup> (3) the historical/experiential/miraculous issues (chaps. 7-10), in which Alonso addresses the issues of the expulsion of the Jews from various parts of the world and the miracles that have occurred to prove to the Jews the truth of Christianity; and (4) the legal issues (chap. 11), in which Alonso presents civil and church laws that have both protected and restricted the Jewish presence in Christendom and in Castile.

Other Christian anti-Jewish texts from the Middle Ages center on one or two areas of human knowledge; the *Fortalitium Fidei* explored and utilized all areas in Alonso's war against the group he perceived as the major enemy of Christianity, the Jews. An overview of these twelve chapters demonstrates the comprehensiveness of Alonso's argument against them, that he was acquainted with every issue Jews and Christians argued about in the Middle Ages, and that he incorporated them all into his text. He also knew and used much of the literature available to the medieval Christian who wanted to polemicize against the Jews. In fact, Alonso preserved material which had been otherwise lost to history.<sup>10</sup> What he lacks in originality and quality in the use of these sources, especially the Jewish texts, he makes up in quantity.<sup>11</sup> He fills

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<sup>9</sup> Alonso considered the Eucharist a major issue between Christians and Jews because fifteen of the twenty-four arguments concern this sacrament in Book III, chapter 5.

<sup>10</sup> For example, Alonso borrows on occasion from the *Libro de Concordia Legum* of Juan de Valladolid (Magister Iohannes Conversus) and the *Liber Bellorum* (or *Las Batallas de Dios*) of Abner of Burgos (Magister Alfonsus Conversus). Since these texts are no longer extant, what we know of them is found in the *Fortalitium Fidei*.

<sup>11</sup> In another context, I tried to explain why the material in Alonso's text lacked in theological sophistication, which is related to the question of his Jewish origins: "If all the Jewish materials in Alfonso's messianic argument are derived from earlier polemical literature, then there is no way to prove that Alfonso was a *converso*, or New Christian, as has been presumed since the seventeenth century. Benzion Netanyahu's study of secondary sources on Alfonso de Espina concerning Alfonso's religious background concludes

over 110 folio pages of the 290-page 1494 incunabulum Koberger edition in his all-out attack against the Jews and Judaism of his time.

### *Jewish Apocalyptic Thought*

Before discussing the role of the Jews in Franciscan apocalyptic thought and Alonso de Espina's place within this tradition, we should acknowledge that messianic/apocalyptic thought fascinated not only friars and other Christians of the fifteenth century but also captivated the Spanish Jewish community of the time. Events such as the anti-Jewish riots that swept through Spain in 1391, the fall of Constantinople in 1453, and the appearance of Halley's comet in 1456 stirred much apocalyptic expectation among the Jews.<sup>12</sup> Since Alonso de Espina was active in the early 1450s and was concerned about the *conversos* (recently converted Jews, or New Christians), it is most probable that, as historian of medieval Spain Yitzhak Baer holds, he knew certain information about Jewish apocalyptic thought.<sup>13</sup> He may have learned about this through

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that one cannot determine that he was a *converso* or converted Jew, based on the evidence from the  *Fortalitium Fidei*. Netanyahu's research shows that Alfonso did not know Hebrew and Aramaic, which he claims proves that Alfonso was not Jewish." "The Sources for Alfonso de Espina's Messianic Argument," 92. Unless we obtain further information on the early life of Alonso de Espina, it is most probable that he was not a *converso*.

<sup>12</sup> As one author states: "Following the anti-Jewish riots of 1391, a powerful messianic tension prevailed among part of the Jewish population in Spain and in Marrano circles. The tension remained constant or even intensified up to and following the general expulsion of 1492. The persecutions at the end of the fourteenth century were regarded as 'birth pangs of the Messiah' and evoked anticipation of an imminent redemption, the impact of which can be seen in messianic agitation and in waves of immigration to the land of Israel. Apocalyptic messianic tension prior to the expulsion reached its peak in the aftermath of the fall of Constantinople, the capital of eastern Byzantine Christianity, into the hands of the Turkish army in 1453. Applying the Aramaic Targum of Lamentations 4:21-22 to the conquest of Constantinople, Jews saw in this the destruction of 'small Rome,' the first step towards the realization of their eschatological hopes, soon to be followed by the destruction of 'large Rome,' the center of western Christianity, which would lead to total redemption." Isaiah Tishby, "Acute Apocalyptic Messianism," in *Essential Papers on Messianic Movements and Personalities in Jewish History*, ed. Marc Saperstein (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 259.

<sup>13</sup> Yitzhak Baer states: "Espina's *Fortalitium Fidei* itself contains much precious information about the messianic ferment which became more intense after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. . . . The statements by the author of the *Fortalitium Fidei* about the return of *conversos* (recently converted Jews) to Judaism of his day seem almost fantastic, yet they are confirmed by the records." *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, trans. Louis Schoffman, et al. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), 2:292. This is confirmed in Book III, chapter 4, argument 21, of the *Fortalitium*

“a wise Jewish person” with whom he had conversations over a four-year period, though he does not explicitly mention these conversations in the text.<sup>14</sup> Such sharing of apocalyptic expectations was more common among fifteenth-century Christians and Jews than originally thought.<sup>15</sup>

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*Fidei*: “Vicesimum primum argumentum Iudeorum contra Christum sumitur ex quarto regno, quod nominavit Daniel in capitulo vii. Super quo sicut dicit Magister Alfonsus Conversus in *Libro Bellorum*, titulo xiii. Aliqui glosatores Iudeorum dixerunt quod illud quartum regnum est regnum Romanorum, ex quo arguunt quod adhuc non venit messias quia vident regnum Romanorum stabile, et ipsi vocant Christianos Romanos ex nomine civitatis Romane que caput est regni sui, ubi est sedes pape et caput est regni sui ecclesie. Et tenent Iudei quod rex messias habebat venire in fine regni Christi, cuius regnum sempiternum erit, ut patet, capitulo eodem, et quia credunt quod gens Romanorum est gens Edom, et quod Iulius Cesar fuit de Edom, et sic alii omnes reges qui fuerunt post eum in Roma. Iungunt etiam cum hoc prophetiam Hieremie, Trenorum iii: *Gaude et letare, filia Edom, que habitas in terra Hus, ad te quoque perveniet calix, inebriaberis, atque nudaberis, completa est iniquitas tua, filia Sion, non addet ultra ut transmigret te.*” Fol. XCVIIIva.

<sup>14</sup> This “wise Jewish person” will be discussed later in this paper. Muslims also engaged in apocalyptic thought in the Middle Ages, as well as Muhammad and his followers, appeared in many Christian apocalyptic treatises of this and earlier periods. Thus, it is not surprising that Muhammad and the Muslims appear in Alonso’s text, albeit confined to Book IV. In fact, Muhammad is identified with the Beast of the Apocalypse (Rev. 13) and the devil, taking on two of the more sinister roles in Alonso’s apocalyptic thought. In Book IV on the Saracens, Alonso speaks of the final punishment that God will inflict upon Christians before the final events of the world take place. Much of this was written around the time of the fall of Constantinople (1453). Alonso quotes from several apocalyptic texts and authors of the Middle Ages, including *Pseudo-Methodius* (a seventh-century Syrian apocalyptic text), Abbot Joachim of Fiore (ca. 1135-1202), Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), Peter Comestor (ca. 1100-1178), and a certain author named Cyril, to show that this final affliction was happening according to the apocalyptic timetable. What should happen after this punishment is the end of Muslim rule: they will fall under the serfdom of the Christians. Alonso is as reluctant in Book IV, as he is when he discusses the final conversion of the Jews in Book III, to calculate when all these final things were to come about. Alonso believed world events of his time concerning the Muslims revealed the rapid approach of the final days. The Christian community had to reform itself immediately to prepare for the end times. On Islamic apocalyptic thought, see Saïd Amir Arjomand, “Islamic Apocalypticism in the Classical Period,” in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 2, *Apocalypticism in Western History and Culture*, ed. Bernard McGinn (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2000), 238-83. On Muhammad in Alonso’s apocalyptic thought, see Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith*, 110-13, 196-208; and Echevarria, “Eschatology or Biography? Alfonso X, Muhammad’s Ladder and a Jewish Go-Between,” in *Under the Influence: Questioning the Comparative in Medieval Castile*, ed. Cynthia Robinson and Leyla Rouhi (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2005), 133-52.

<sup>15</sup> On the influence of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic expectations upon one another, see David B. Ruderman, “Hope against Hope: Jewish and Christian Messianic Expectations in the later Middle Ages,” in *Essential Papers on Jewish Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 185-202.

*The Jews in Franciscan Missionary Thought*

In Franciscan thinking about the mendicant mission to non-Christians the discussion of Jews and their role in salvation history appears.<sup>16</sup> Since the early Franciscans believed “that the Order was the divinely inspired *renovatio* of the evangelical life in the last age of the world,”<sup>17</sup> their concept of mission led them to focus their activities on the conversion of all peoples of the world. They should evangelize in a number of distinctive ways: by living and witnessing by their example among Muslims and other nonbelievers, by preaching, by writing apologetic and polemical tracts, by writing about and placing hope in the conversion of all peoples in the eschatological/apocalyptic future, and by martyrdom.<sup>18</sup>

The friars’ first intellectual encounter with Judaism appears in the middle of the thirteenth century in their biblical commentaries, their commentaries on the major theological themes of Peter Lombard’s *Book of Sentences*, and other theological works. One of the first recorded instances of the friars’ personal encounter with Jews occurred during the debate about and subsequent burning of the Talmud in Paris in 1240.<sup>19</sup> Based on that experience, the friars began to reflect on the role of the Jews in an eschatological/apocalyptic context, and this subject found its place in contemporary Franciscan scholarship.

Also, in the middle of the thirteenth century, the friars began contemplating specifically the Jewish role in salvation history in the context of Joachim de Fiore’s apocalyptic thought. Common themes that the friars would incorporate from the writings (and pseudo writings) of Joachim were “belief in the unfolding of salvation in a Trinitarian pattern of three, the imminent coming of an age of a Holy Spirit, and the exaltation of the Jews as part of the culmination of earthly history.”<sup>20</sup>

It should be pointed out, however, that even before Joachite thought appeared in the early thirteenth century, “[t]he expectation of the final conversion of the Jews after the entrance of the fullness of the Gentiles

<sup>16</sup> See Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*.

<sup>17</sup> Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*, 37.

<sup>18</sup> See Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*; and John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 214-32.

<sup>19</sup> On the Paris Talmud controversy, see Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), 317-42.

<sup>20</sup> Robert E. Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 120.



into the faith existed independently of Joachimism—it was a tradition that went back to St. Paul himself.”<sup>21</sup> This belief in the final conversion of the Jews during the end times was, in fact, the cornerstone of Franciscan thinking about Jews. For example, Bonaventure (1221-74) envisioned that the Jews would be saved at the end in the millennial age as a fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecies and of the witness of the Apostle Paul.<sup>22</sup>

It was the thirteenth-century friar Peter John Olivi (d. 1298) who incorporated Joachimism into a Franciscan vision of salvation history. The spiritual church, based on its adherence to strict poverty (as Francis of Assisi had modeled), would battle the carnal church. A major aspect of this part of history would be the battle with the great Antichrist and the subsequent ushering in of the seventh period of history, the earthly Sabbath. In Olivi’s vision, the Jews would convert to Christianity as “part and parcel of the coming joyful Sabbath on earth.”<sup>23</sup>

Other friars, like John of Rupescissa (ca. 1310-65), would repeat many of these themes found in the Joachite legacy.<sup>24</sup> Some of the friars in this tradition even exalted the role of the Jews in this final millennial age. For example, Francesc Eiximenis (ca. 1327-1409) envisioned this last age as a definitive thousand-year period that would begin with the defeat of Antichrist and the subsequent conversion of the Jews. But he also envisioned that the papal court would move to Jerusalem and that a new pope and new emperor would emerge from the lineage of the recently converted Jews.<sup>25</sup> Another friar, Frederick of Braunschweig, was condemned around 1392 for a similar set of errors: “The advent of Antichrist was within four and one-half years; the imminent restoration

<sup>21</sup> Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*, 76.

<sup>22</sup> As proof texts that the Jews will convert at the end times, Bonaventure cites Isaiah 10:22, 9:7, 1:3, 2:3-5, 12; Romans, 9:27, 11:16, and 11:25; and Philipians 3:5. See Bonaventure’s *Collations of the Six Days*, found in *The Works of Bonaventure*, trans. José de Vinck (Paterson, N.J.: Franciscan Press, 1970), 5:229-30. Robert Lerner has studied Bonaventure’s approach to the Jews in this text and concludes: “Thus it seems most likely that his promise of a millennial exaltation of the Jews occurs in the *Collations* for two reasons, first because it was intrinsic to the entire Joachite conception of a Sabbath of glory and peace, and second because as a good Franciscan Bonaventure upheld an ideal of mission whereby Jews would one day be brought miraculously within the fold. Pressing this point, he then took an extraordinary step when he concluded that Isaiah’s messianic promises understood by Christians until then as pertaining to the first advent of Christ applied as well to the millennial reign on earth when Jews once more would be blessed.” *The Feast of Saint Abraham*, 53.

<sup>23</sup> Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham*, 62.

<sup>24</sup> On John of Rupescissa, see Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham*, 73-88.

<sup>25</sup> Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham*, 101-10.

of the Jews' temporal power, including the reconstruction of Jerusalem; the coming of a "humble person," a friar minor, who would be a *reparator* and would kill the Antichrist; and, finally, the beginning of Christ's millennial kingdom on earth, which would be ruled by the *reparator* (at once pope and emperor) under the law of the Holy Spirit.<sup>26</sup> This positive role for the Jews in the apocalyptic scenario appears in its most extreme form in the thought of a layman, Nicholas of Buldesdorf (burned at the stake in 1446), who was greatly influenced by the Franciscan apocalyptic theorists John of Rupescissa and Theosphorus of Cosenzal. "He thought, for example, that the Angelic Pope was the same as the Messiah expected by the Jews and that he would free them from their captivity and make them rule over the world. The candelabrum of the church (Rev. 4:5) will be returned to the synagogue. To be saved, the Jews will not need to convert to Christianity; they need only be faithful to the Mosaic Law and to their fathers' traditions."<sup>27</sup> This position—that the Jews need not convert to Christianity—is extraordinary in relation to the position of Alonso de Espina, writing only fourteen years later, who envisioned a quite different scenario for the Jews.

Besides the previously mentioned themes that the friars borrowed from Joachim of Fiore, other theme also appeared in this literature that focused on the role of Francis and the Franciscan Order. Certain Franciscan writers, like Bonaventure, would promote Francis as the "Angel of the Sixth Seal," making him the centerpiece of Franciscan eschatology.<sup>28</sup> As Francis became the forerunner of Christ's Second

<sup>26</sup> Gian Luca Potestà, "Radical Apocalyptic Movements in the Late Middle Ages," in *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, 2:131.

<sup>27</sup> Potestà, "Radical Apocalyptic Movements," 132. See also the chapter on Nicholas in Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham*, 89-100.

<sup>28</sup> E. Randolph Daniel states: "By identifying Francis with the angel of the sixth seal, St. Bonaventure sought to express Francis' significance within the framework of Augustinian eschatology. In Bonaventure's eyes Francis' uncommon level of sanctity made him an imitator of angelic purity and an example to the followers of Christ. He was an Elijah-type figure sent by God to prepare men in these last and most dangerous times for the coming of Christ in glory, even as John the Baptist had called men to repentance before the first coming of Christ in humility. For Bonaventure, this identification hinged upon and found its justification in the stigmata, 'the symbol of the likeness of the living God, namely of Christ crucified.' With it he sought to represent Francis's total conformity with Christ, particularly with the passion, and to symbolize Francis's role as a forerunner of Christ's Second Coming." *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*, 29-30. On Francis's role in the Spiritual Franciscans, see Burr, "Franciscan Exegesis and Francis as Apocalyptic Figure," in *Monks, Nuns, and Friars in Medieval Society*, ed. Edward B. King, Jacqueline T. Schaefer, and William B. Wadley (Sewanee, Tenn.: Press of the University of the South, 1989), 51-62.

Coming, it was easy for the early Franciscans to see themselves as part of the mission to prepare the world for his arrival.

Peter John Olivi made this connection between Francis and his faithful followers in the mission to the Muslims.<sup>29</sup> In Olivi's apocalyptic scenario, after the fall of the great Antichrist and the carnal church, the conversion of the Muslims and other nonbelievers would take place, ushering in the time of the salvation of the Jews. This wonderful eventuality would take place through the agency of the *evangelicus ordo*—the Franciscans.<sup>30</sup> Olivi believed that "just as the apostles had been sent first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles, so the Franciscan Order in the sixth status had been sent, first to the Latins, and then to the nations of unbelievers so that the *plenitudo gentium* might enter and all Israel be

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<sup>29</sup> Daniel has written about this connection: "[St. Francis] . . . placed his right foot upon the sea (see Rev. 10:2), because moved by intense desire and fervor, he sought to go to the Saracens, in order to convert them and to receive martyrdom at their hands. As the angel of the sixth seal (Rev. 7:2), he set out in the sixth year after his conversion [1212], signifying thus that the Saracens would be converted in the sixth status of the church by means of his *ordo*. [He went] again in the thirteenth year from his conversion [1219] as a sign that in the thirteenth century after the passion and resurrection of Christ, the Saracens and other infidels would begin to be converted by his *ordo*, many of the members of which would be martyred." *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*, 84.

<sup>30</sup> Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*, 84. On this issue, Philip Krey states: "Beginning in the 1240's, Franciscans interpreted the prophecies of Joachim of Fiore (1135-1202)—that two orders would soon appear which would fulfill the eschatological roles of Elijah and Moses—as predicting the mendicant orders. In the Franciscan interpretation, the mendicants were the 'spiritual men' foretold by Joachim who would challenge the Antichrist and rule in the coming millennial state of the Church through perfect poverty. Between 1242 and 1249 Alexander Minorita, a German layman who became a Franciscan in the 1240's reworked his earlier 1235 commentary on the Apocalypse to incorporate Franciscanized Joachite prophecies into it. Alexander's Apocalypse commentary became an important model for [Nicholas of] Lyra's *Postill*." *Nicholas of Lyra's Apocalypse Commentary* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), 2-3. Nicholas of Lyra's *Literal Postill on the Whole Bible* (1332-33), as Krey explains on p. 9, "was a running commentary on the Old and New Testaments, intended primarily for theologians as a basis for dogmatics and as a reform of the over-allegorization of the Bible employed by Lyra's contemporaries. Nicholas tried to discover the intention of the human authors in the literal sense of the Bible by looking at the grammar, philology, historical context, and the place of the passage in the whole outline of the biblical book." Nicholas is one who does not accept the role that Francis and the Franciscans play in some of the earlier commentaries on the Apocalypse, as Krey states on pp. 22-23: "Lyra, therefore, does not accept the apocalyptic role that the Franciscans traditionally assigned to St. Francis. The Franciscan mission did not look too promising in his context, and seemed more in need of reform than eschatological propaganda. A chastened eschatology turns Lyra away from images of the mendicants as the foundation of the new Jerusalem to an equally Franciscan focus on Christology, sacramental piety, trinitarianism, and a balanced ecclesiology."

converted.”<sup>31</sup> For Olivi and other fourteenth-century Franciscans, the role of the friars in the eventual conversion of the Jews was essential in the apocalyptic timetable.

When we review the literature of the Franciscan Joachites of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, certain of the following characteristics appear in each one of their writings: the expectation of the imminence of the end of the present age; the belief in a current confrontation within the church between the agents of good on one side and Antichrist and his followers on the other; the expectation of defeat of the dread Last Enemy and the establishment of the contemplative church of the perfect in the third status or seventh age of history about to dawn; the identification of the Franciscans and Dominicans with the two groups of *virī spirituales* prophesied by Joachim; the specification of poverty as the special sign of these spiritual men; and the belief that Saint Francis was the Angel of the Sixth Seal of Revelation 7:2, whose advent marked the beginning of the critical period of history immediately preceding the coming of Antichrist.<sup>32</sup> By the middle of the fifteenth century, most of this Franciscan-Joachite tradition had been either forgotten or almost totally rejected.<sup>33</sup> But especially lacking—which will be both restored and highlighted by Alonso de Espina’s own apocalyptic scenario—is the major role the Jews will play during the final events of world history.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission*, 86.

<sup>32</sup> These are the essential elements of the Franciscan apocalyptic tradition as presented by the study of Burr, Daniel, Podestá, and Lerner.

<sup>33</sup> Bernardine of Siena had been influenced by the Spiritual Franciscans in his earlier years but seems to have renounced this tradition later in his preaching career. On the issue of Bernardine and Antichrist’s role in his apocalyptic thought, a recent study concludes: “Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), the most famous preacher of his day, offers a good example of the shift [away from preaching about Antichrist’s imminence]. From 1413 to 1417 the Franciscan preached almost exclusively on the Apocalypse, making considerable use of the pessimistic commentary of Matthew of Sweden, one of Birgitta of Sweden’s followers. At this time, he insisted that Antichrist was near, especially because of the ‘triple silence’ he discerned in the contemporary Church—*silentium praedicationis*, *silentium devotionis*, *silentium timorationis* (silence of preaching, of devotion, and of fear of God). Between 1418 and 1423, however, Bernardino shifted his message. Antichrist was still a part of his preaching, but he emphasized a moral message (for instance, combating the evils that make us part of Antichrist’s body, like usury), and he also adopted a more positive attitude toward the present situation of the Church. In his later sermons (after 1423), he dropped all references to the proximate coming Antichrist, and, as is typical of disillusioned apocalypticists, he attacked the dangers of false speculations on Antichrist’s advent.” Quoted from Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994), 180.

<sup>34</sup> Burr’s analysis of the early friars comes to the conclusion that “[t]he Jews are included in the general scenario, but in the final analysis their role is a minor one. The general tendency here is to see the apocalyptic tribulation as a result, not of outside

A major difference between Alonso and the other fifteenth-century mendicants like Bernardine of Siena and Girolamo Savonarola in their apocalyptic writings is the context in which it appears. Generally the other mendicants present their apocalyptic thought in the broad context of church renewal and reform.<sup>35</sup> Their apocalyptic outlook is formed by their reading of and preaching on the book of Revelation. For example, Bernardine of Siena appears to have read and reflected upon the book of Revelation over the course of his entire life, which reading influenced his preaching on moral reform.<sup>36</sup> His main issue was the reform of the church, but his theology of history situates this reform in the context of ecclesiastical and world history. The goal of Bernardine's preaching, based on the book of Revelation, was the purification, renewal, and reform of the individual and society.<sup>37</sup>

The book of Revelation also framed the preaching activity of Girolamo Savonarola in late fifteenth-century Florence. Savonarola's vision of Florence as the "New Jerusalem" in the late fifteenth century aimed at reforming the entire church and Florentine society. In both Bernardine and Savonarola, the Jews fit into their apocalyptic scenario as one enemy among many that prevents the reform of church and society. For Savonarola especially, the corrupt clergy and sinners in general thwart the renewal and reformation of Florence.<sup>38</sup> Antichrist appears as a sign

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threats, but of trouble within the Christian community." "The Antichrist and the Jews in Four Thirteenth-Century Apocalypse Commentaries," in *Friars and Jews in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Steven J. McMichael and Susan E. Myers (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004), 28. On Peter John Olivi, Burr comments on p. 38: "If Olivi's scenario was anti-Jewish, it was at least the mildest form anti-Jewish rhetoric might be expected to take in the thirteenth century. In an age when secular and ecclesiastical institutions were prone to coercive behavior in dealing with the Jews, Olivi displayed greater distrust of those institutions than of the Jews and envisaged a universal conversion which depended, not on the power of the church and state, but on a handful of poor preachers who would speak only to those who freely consented to listen."

<sup>35</sup> They are examples of the proponents of the Gregorian model of apocalyptic reform. See McGinn, "Apocalypticism and Church Reform: 1100-1500," in *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism*, ed. Bernard McGinn, John J. Collins, and Stephen J. Stein (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003), esp. 290-91.

<sup>36</sup> Franco Mormando, *The Preacher's Demons: Bernardino of Siena and the Social Underworld of Early Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 95.

<sup>37</sup> Mormando, *The Preacher's Demons*, 98.

<sup>38</sup> On Savonarola and the Jews of Florence, Donald Weinstein states: "In contrast to Fra Bernardino da Feltre he does not seem to have attempted to stir up the mob against the Jews, or to have criticized the government's policy in allowing them to reside in Florence, or to have supported the alternative policy of establishing a Monte di Pietà." *Savonarola and Florence: Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), 128.

of the corruption of the church in the times they were living. He would bring with him what Savonarola calls the "flagellation."

In contrast, in the *Fortalitium Fidei* of Alonso de Espina, the Jews and Judaism find their place in an apocalyptic of devastating consequence. He does blame the clergy (in the prologue) and other Christian sinners (the heretics, which is the theme of Book II) as contributors to the corruption of Christian society, but he gives a special place to Jews as the main corrupters of church and society. We find his apocalyptic presentation in the very last pages of Book III in which Alonso shows that the last hope is that Jews will finally and completely convert only during the end times. This apocalyptic dimension shows that the main enemies of church reform are in a limited but still harmful way within the Church, that is, the *conversos* who were allegedly judaizing. The enemies of the church were more generally and emphatically outside the Christian community—that is, the non-converted Jews who were living in fifteenth-century Spain. On one hand, the Jews were in league with heretics, demons, and Muslims; and on the other hand, they were viewed as the main internal enemy of church reform.

#### *Social Context in Spain: Old Christians among Jews and Conversos*

Fifteenth-century Spain witnessed great socio-religious and political changes. The 1391 anti-Jewish riots, the anti-Jewish legislation that culminated in the 1412 Valladolid anti-Jewish laws, the preaching of religious leaders such as the Dominican Vincent Ferrer, and the Tortosa Disputation of 1413-14 all contributed to anti-Jewish sentiments throughout this entire century in Spain. These changes finally led to the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. Although there were periods of relative toleration and recovery within the Jewish community during the 1420s, 1430s, and 1440s, the situation changed radically in 1449 for both Jews and *conversos*. Rioters in Toledo and other Andalusian cities attacked *conversos* because they resented the wealth, position, and power of the *conversos*. This unrest resulted in the promulgation of the *Sententia-Estatuto* of Pedro Sarmiento setting restrictions on the authority of and economic opportunities for the *conversos*. They were not to hold any municipal office. This legislation attempted to eliminate judaizing among Christians, but it served only to add tension to the already existing conflict involving Old Christians, the *conversos*, and the Jews. Racial, economic, and religious factors all contributed to the social unrest that took place in the late 1440s and early 1450s.

Legislation following the events of 1449 underlines the main religious question of the time: Is it possible for Jews to be true converts to Christianity? In other words, can they possess “purity of the Christian faith”? For many Old Christians, including Alonso de Espina, the distinction between a true convert and one who was reverting back to Judaism was very blurred. The fact that a contemporary of Alonso’s, Alonso de Cartagena (ca. 1385-1456), had to make the following distinction makes it clear that many in Spain did not think this was possible: “The whole issue centered around defining who are ‘those who descend from the Jews.’”<sup>39</sup> Alonso de Cartagena rejected the ruling of the Visigothic Synod of 633 as well as the privilege of King Alfonso and declared that only those *conversos* who lapsed into their old Jewish practices should rightly be called *hii qui ex iudaeis sunt*.<sup>40</sup> But Alonso de Cartagena’s stance on this issue was not the majority opinion in Spain at the time, nor did Alonso de Espina agree with this position.<sup>41</sup>

The major theological issue that comes into play at this time in response to the *Sententia-Estatuto* was the role of the old (Mosaic) covenant by Alonso de Cartagena and Juan de Torquemada (1388-1468). These authors challenged such issues as the nobility of the *conversos* based on the Jewish bloodline of Jesus, the validity of baptism of converts, the continuing validity of certain Jewish practices among the *conversos*, and God’s continuing election of the Jewish people.<sup>42</sup> They proposed a theology of covenant that would bridge the religious and social gap between

<sup>39</sup> Haim Beinart, “The Conversos and Their Fate,” in *Spain and the Jews: The Sephardi Experience, 1492 and After*, ed. Elie Kedourie (London: University of London, 1992), 94.

<sup>40</sup> Beinart, “The Conversos and Their Fate,” 94.

<sup>41</sup> Beinart summarizes Alonso’s position on the *conversos*: “The author insists on drastic measures being taken against Jews and conversos alike. He describes all the transgressions of the conversos and their lapses from Christianity, passages which read as if they had been copied from the files of the Inquisition more than twenty years after his book was written. Conversos, the author maintains, adhere to the faith of their ancestors, a thorn in the flesh of Christendom. He describes in detail the precepts of Judaism which they keep, the trickery they use to arrange circumcision for their newborn sons, the way they intermarry in order to avoid being assimilated into Christian society, often with relatives of degrees forbidden by the Church. He attacks educated conversos for their philosophical views, for their search for fraudulent Gospels, for their rejection of the immortality of the soul, quoting a maxim prevalent among them: *En este mundo non me versa malpasar, e en el otro non me versa penar* (‘In this world you will not see me suffer, and in the next you will not see me being punished’). The observance of the tenets of Jewish creed and precepts, such as the donations of oil to the synagogues; observance of Jewish burial practices; observance of the Sabbath; education of their children in Jewish ways, as well as their transgressions against Christianity, all these are described in his book.” “The Conversos and Their Fate,” 105.

<sup>42</sup> On the issue of covenant theology, see Bruce Rosenstock, *New Men: Conversos, Christian*

Old Christians, *conversos*, and Jews that the events of 1449 had exacerbated. Alonso de Cartagena and Torquemada envisioned, based on their reading of Paul's Letter to the Romans (chap. 11), a theology of reconciliation established on the foundation of covenant theology.

Once the Jews recognize that the law of grace is the consummation and not the abrogation of the law of Moses, they will join the Church in massive numbers and inaugurate a new era in human history. Cartagena and Torquemada believe that this recognition is taking hold in the Jewish world and is being threatened by the anti-*converso* paganism of the Toledan rebels and their racist legislation. It is not Judaism that stands in the way of the unification of humankind, but this resurgent paganism, the attachment to ethnically defined nationhood rather than to the idea of a universal peoplehood constituted through spiritual rebirth. It was paganism that fought against the Church Militant and continues to fight it as, at long last, the Jewish people are taking their rightful place of dignity and honour within the Church. And it is paganism that is resisting the royal ideology at the heart of the emerging nation state.<sup>43</sup>

We do not know if Alonso de Espina knew of this positive approach to the enduring Mosaic covenant, but it is certain that he would have rejected it, as he clearly laid out in the *Fortalitium Fidei*.<sup>44</sup> This theology of abrogation—in which the Mosaic Covenant serves no ongoing purpose—only enslaves those who continue to observe it. He would have said the Jews' only positive role is their converting during the final days. Their continuing embrace of the Old Law simply keeps them from taking this decisive step in salvation history.

Since Alonso was active in the 1550s, he was very aware of the serious problems that existed within Spanish society at that time. He saw Jews as the main enemies, and his entire Book III of the *Fortalitium Fidei* is primarily aimed at Jews and Judaism. The inclusion of an entire chapter in Book III (chap. 9) on the expulsion of the Jews from the Holy Land, France, England, and early medieval Spain (during the reign

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*Theology, and Society in Fifteenth-Century Castile* (London: University of London, 2002). Also see the review of this book by David Nirenberg in *Speculum* 50, no. 1 (January 2005): 315-17. For the texts of Alonso de Cartagena and Juan de Torquemada, see *Alonso de Cartagena y el "Defensorium Unitatis Christianae,"* ed. Guillermo Verdín-Díaz (Toledo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1992); and *Tratado contra los medianitas e ismaelitas, de Juan de Torquemada*, ed. Carlos de Valle (Madrid: Aben Ezra Ediciones, 2002).

<sup>43</sup> Rosenstock, *New Men*, 71.

<sup>44</sup> See McMichael, "Alfonso de Espina and the Mosaic Law," in *Friars and Jews in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, 199-223.



of King Sisebut [612-21], when many Jews were forcibly converted to Christianity or expelled) reveals that Alonso thought expulsion was the solution to the Jewish problem. He spoke of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain because he knew that Spanish Christians were facing the same dilemma as all Christians in Europe.

Modern studies have shown that the Jews were not expelled from Spain during Sisebut's reign, but give credence to the claim that, at that time, many Jews were forcibly converted to Christianity and that there was a renewal in legislation against Jews, "culminating in a royal decree ordering all Jews to accept Christian baptism."<sup>45</sup> Certain Jews who were forcibly converted during the seventh century reverted back to Jewish practices, resulting in a situation like that of Alonso's fifteenth-century Spain in which there was a group of judaizing *conversos* within Christian society.<sup>46</sup> This matter had also been dealt with at the Fourth Toledo Council in 633: "The Council decreed in a series of canons, that those forcibly converted during Sisebut's reign should not be permitted to return to their former religion because they had partaken of Christian sacraments. As for those who had already apostatized, they were to have their children removed from them, doubtless to be brought up as Christians, their slaves were to be liberated, and being, as it were, forsworn, they were deprived of the right to give evidence at law."<sup>47</sup> Alonso states that the Jews were allowed to return under the reign of King Rodrigo (710-11); he knew this from the *Cronicis Hispanie* (Chronicles of Spain) and the archives of Juan Gil de Zamora (d. ca. 1318). He reports that Spain experienced prosperity under the first king (Sisebut), because of his expulsion of the Jews, and ill fortune under the second (Rodrigo), who let them return to Spain.<sup>48</sup> What is interesting here is

<sup>45</sup> On this period of Spanish history, see especially Roger Collins, *Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity, 400-1000* (London: Macmillan Education, 1983), 131, 129-45. Also see Raúl González-Salineró, "Catholic Anti-Judaism in Visigoth Spain," in *The Visigoths: Studies in Culture and Society*, ed. Alberto Ferreiro (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 123-50.

<sup>46</sup> Collins states: "Some of them practiced their imposed new faith outwardly, without believing in it, whilst others openly lapsed back into Judaism in defiance of their enforced baptism." *Early Medieval Spain*, 151.

<sup>47</sup> Collins continues: "This last ruling will have left them incapable of initiating litigation and vulnerable to legal attack by others. So the long-term effect of Sisebut's activity was to drive some Jews into Christianity and to further weaken the status and legal standing of others. IV Toledo went on to reiterate at great length the inhibitions placed on the Jews by III Toledo. VI Toledo of 636 also confirmed those decrees, in even more grandiloquent terms, speaking of the ardent desire of the new king, Chintila (636-639), not to allow anyone who was not a Catholic to dwell in his realm. VIII Toledo of 653, held under King Reccesuinth, did likewise." *Early Medieval Spain*, 131-32.

<sup>48</sup> The Latin text reads: "[A]rchivo fratris Johannes Egidii Zamorensis ex quibus patet

that this discussion of expulsions did not lead Alonso to discuss explicitly the banishment of the Jews from Spain. It would seem logical for him to do so at this point. It is very obvious that he desired that the Jews be expelled from Spain and an inquisition be established to root out judaizing *conversos*, as Yitzhak Baer holds: "Out of the abundant material and scholastic casuistry with which his book is filled, his practical aim emerges very clearly: the establishment of an Inquisition and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. His voluminous work contains a methodical program, which the Catholic Monarchs themselves were to carry into effect by those very means in the years from 1481 to 1492."<sup>49</sup> Alonso's connection with the establishment of the Inquisition in Spain has strong foundations,<sup>50</sup> but his involvement with the Catholic Monarchs and their program for expulsion of the Jews does not. There is no hard evidence to verify that Ferdinand and Isabella knew of the  *Fortalitium Fidei*. Surely the concerns which led them to expel the Jews were the same as Alonso's, but the question remains whether there was a direct connection between the  *Fortalitium Fidei* and their decision of 1492.<sup>51</sup>

Concerning the issue of the *conversos*, Alonso deals with the alleged Jewish blasphemy of the name of Christ and the subversion of the newly baptized in an earlier chapter of Book III. Presumably he is addressing the issue of retaining the newly baptized Jews.<sup>52</sup> Alonso argues that the

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prospiritas primi regis expellentes Iudeos ab Hyspania, et infelicitas secundi deducens eos ad candem." Fol. CLXXra.

<sup>49</sup> *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 284.

<sup>50</sup> The  *Fortalitium Fidei* "formulated the agenda" for an Inquisition which King Enrique IV responded to in the early 1460s. "King Enrique IV did not delay in responding to the  *Fortalitium*: in 1461 he issued a request to Pope Pius II for the establishment of a Castilian Inquisition. Although the king failed to act on the papal bull he received, he did sanction a nonpapal Episcopal Inquisition during the 1460s." Gregory B. Kaplan, *The Evolution of Converso Literature: The Writings of the Converted Jews of Medieval Spain* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 26.

<sup>51</sup> This was confirmed in a private letter sent to me by the historian John Edwards of the University of Birmingham (April 30, 1993) in which he writes: "I know of no direct textual link between Espina and the expulsion in 1492, although the climate of opinion between the publication of the  *Fortalitium* and the expulsion was pretty clearly influenced by the text." There is evidence that suggests that Alonso was killed because he was going after a prominent *converso*, Diego Arias, while on a preaching mission promoting not only the establishment of the Inquisition but also the wearing of badges that bore the Holy Name of Jesus. See Edwards, "Fifteenth-Century Franciscan Reform," 203-10.

<sup>52</sup> The Latin text reads: "Sextus articulus est scire qua pena sunt feriendi Iudei blasphemantes nomen Christi vel attemptantes subvertere baptizatos. Ad primum responderetur secundum Hostiensis, quod omnis talis secundum leges decapitatur etiam Christianus.

Jews, since their presence is tolerated in Christian society, should be severely restricted so that their influence cannot be felt by Old Christians and the recently baptized *conversos*.

But the mystery remains: What did Alonso believe should be done about Spanish Jews? He knew that Jews were tolerated, but he wondered whether they should be expelled and even killed. Certainly he believed that Jews should not have any superiority or authority over Christians. He approved the legislation that severely restricted Jews from interaction with both Christians and newly converted Jews, as evidenced by his citation from the following canon of Gratian: "Fellowship with the wicked can often corrupt the good, especially those inclined toward vice. There is therefore to be no contact between Jews brought into the Christian faith and those who remain in the old rite, lest they be subverted by contact with them. Therefore henceforth any of those who have been baptized and who do not shun the company of infidels are to be turned over to Christians and those infidels are to be condemned to public flogging."<sup>53</sup>

Alonso's attitude toward the *conversos* in the *Fortalitium Fidei* should be seen, therefore, within the context of his overall attitude toward Jews. But there is a significant difference in approach. Alonso saw that "purity of blood" (*limpieza de sangre*) and the economic and social problems created by *conversos* called for different solutions.<sup>54</sup> The apostasy of judaizing *conversos* was, for the medieval Christian, the worst sin imaginable.

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Unde principes seculares Iudeos Christum blasphemantes graviter punire debent cum pena pecuniaria sive etiam graviore, extra eo, in nonnullis in fine, ubi sic habetur illud autem strictissime iubemus ne incontumeliam creatoris prosilire presumant, et quoniam illius dissimulare non debemus obprobrium qui probra nostra delevit, precipimus qui presumptores huiusmodi per principes seculares condigne anima animadversionis adiectione compesti, ne crucifixum pro nobis aliquatenus blasphemare presumant. Ad secundum dicitur quod Iudeus qui nititur subvertere baptizatos debet publicis flagellationibus deputari xxviii, q. 1 sepe. Ita tamen quod hec pena non transeat invindictam sanguinis, quia talis pena relinquenda est brachio seculari." Fol. CLXXVI, vb.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Chazan, *Church, State and Jews in the Middle Ages* (New York: Behrman House, 1980), 24.

<sup>54</sup> This confirms the research of Norman Roth, who writes: "The emergence of true anti-Semitism, i.e., hatred of Jewish 'racial' and personal characteristics and of the *people* and not the religion, centuries before it was once again to break forth in Europe, is the key to understanding the topics with which this book deals. The motivating factors were, as usual, many, including economic and social jealousy of the new 'converso class,' religious bigotry, etc. This was clearly a new manifestation, however, in that the efforts of the bigots were frustrated by the official teaching of the Church, and by the many Church leaders who insisted on its strict application, according to which no distinction could be made between 'old' and 'new' Christians. In order to carry their mission to its ultimate disastrous conclusion, therefore, the enemies of the *conversos* had to develop

To be a Jew was problematic enough for Alonso, but to be a converted Jew and revert back to Judaism was the more horrendous sin (as he states in chap. 12, sec. 3, of Book III, which we will see shortly): "I believe that if a true inquisition would spring up especially at this time that innumerable Jews [*conversos*] would be delivered to the flames, [especially] those who are discovered to be really judaizing, who, if they are not punished here most crudely, how greatly they will burn in the eternal fire."<sup>55</sup>

*The Context of Alonso's Presentation of Antichrist and the Jews within  
Book III of the Fortalitium Fidei*

In the twelfth and last chapter of Book III, "De Iudeorum bello contra fidei fortalitium" (On the War of the Jews against the Fortress of Faith), of the *Fortalitium Fidei*, Alonso focuses his attention on the conversion of the Jews to Christian truth at the end of the present age of the world. He has already shown throughout Book III, by means of biblical, theological, philosophical, legal, and social arguments, that the Jews have every reason to abandon their Jewish heritage for the sake of embracing Christian truth; but their blindness, stubbornness, and evil nature prevent them from taking this step toward their salvation.

The first eleven chapters of Book III, therefore, are intended to show how Jews allegedly resist in every way possible the offer of salvation and also how they are a great danger to Christians. They use such things as scriptural interpretation, theological reasoning, cunning logic, magic, and medicine to attack Christians and their religious faith.<sup>56</sup>

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a counter theory, the pernicious idea of 'racial purity,' *limpieza de sangre*. Accordingly, it was not that the conversos were not 'good Christians,' for in fact everyone knew they were, but that inherent characteristics corrupted them ('Jewish blood'), and through them would corrupt all of Christian society. The only solution to this imagined threat was, first, the total isolation of conversos in society, and, finally, their complete elimination through the fires of the Inquisition." *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 314.

<sup>55</sup> Alonso's text reads: "Credo quod si vera fieret inquisitio presertim isto tempore quod innumerales ignibus traderentur de his qui iudaizare realiter invenirentur, qui si hic non puniantur crudelius quam publici Iudei eternis ignibus cremabuntur." Fol. CLXXXIIIv.

<sup>56</sup> Gilbert Dahan explains that "the anxiety of religious authorities would bring debates of this kind [positive relationships between Jews and Christians] to an end. Their ancient fear, expressed more and more frequently beginning in the twelfth century, was this: that the Jews, who knew the Old Testament so well, and who were considered subtle and skilled dialecticians, were able to easily 'seduce' the 'simple' Christians, ignorant and ill-prepared for such oratorical matches. This was a reason often put forward in the

Alonso intended to provide the tools by which this Jewish assault on Christianity could be thwarted. In spite of the fact that this war was going on, Alonso concludes Book III on a cautionary positive note: he holds out to his fellow Christians the hope that God will act decisively on behalf of the Jews as God has promised with the final conversion of the Jews at the end of the present age of the world.

This final conversion is the subject matter of this twelfth and last chapter of Book III of the  *Fortalitium Fidei* . There is a tension, therefore, between what Alonso says about the Jews in the first eleven chapters and what he says in the first five and final three sections of chapter 12. The first sections are to convince the reader that the Jews are the main enemies of Christianity, but the last sections hold out the eschatological hope that the Jews will convert to Christianity.

Why does Alonso hope for the conversion of the Jews when these conversions will create more  *conversos*  living in Christendom? Even though he does not state this explicitly, it is reasonable to conclude that he believed that, since God will be the one acting decisively in this final conversion of the Jews, there was no need to worry about the purity of belief of the converted Jews, as some Old Christians were doing in the fifteenth century. In Alonso's apocalyptic scenario, certain Jews would be led away by Antichrist, while the others would sincerely embrace Christian truth.

### *The Context of Alonso's Apocalyptic Thought in Book III, Consideration 12*

The twelfth chapter is composed of eight sections that address practical, legal, and theological issues dealing with Jewish conversion to Christianity.<sup>57</sup> Before discussing the final apocalyptic scenario, at which time the Jews will finally convert to Christ, Alonso felt compelled to deal with certain more basic conversionary issues. Therefore, in the first five sections he considers questions of a more practical nature.

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commentaries on canon law to justify measures isolating the Jews or banning Christians from sharing meals with them. This is clearly stated in a canon of the Council of Bourges (1276) which aimed at banishing Jews from small towns: 'With regard to the Jews, whose disbelief often tricks simple Christians fraudulently, leading them with malice into error, we have found it advisable, with the holy council's approval, to rule that they live in the cities, fortified towns, or other well-known places.'” *The Christian Polemic against the Jews in the Middle Ages*, trans. Jody Gladding (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), 27-28.

<sup>57</sup> Alisa Meyühas Ginio reviews this chapter in *De bello iudaeorum*, 93-98. She provides a good overview to this chapter, but much detail has been left out that I am filling in here, especially in the area of the theological meaning of Alonso's presentation.

The first question Alonso asks is why the Jews will not convert to Christianity. He states that this is due, first, to their refusal to properly use the Algadoth passages of the Talmud, along with the legal sections of the same text. He supposes that, if the Jews would read this literature in a proper way, they would see that these Jewish writings lead them to the Christian truth.<sup>58</sup> Alonso presents three types of Jewish literature found in the Talmud: civil and criminal legal material pertaining to living among the nations; laws pertaining to food laws, things of the world, sacrifices, prayers and festivals; and the more historical material such as the creation of the world, the life of the ancient patriarchs, and theological matters such as the resurrection of the dead, day of judgment, and hell and paradise.

This third category, Alonso claims, is what the Jews call the Algadoth, that is, the Haggadah (Agada). He further states that the Jews also have another type of literature which he calls the "moral glosses" (*glose morales*), which are clarifying comments written alongside the words of scripture by subsequent readers of the biblical text. These last types of literature, the Haggadah and the moral glosses, are found among the diverse parts of the Talmud that the rabbis use in their own applications of the law to their lives. Alonso states that the principal cause of their obstinacy stems from the rabbis who do not read or consider these writings, since they do not produce for them anything useful and profitable. Therefore, the common folk among the Jews remains ignorant and blind.

Secondly, the Jews do not arrive at Christian truth because they do not read Scripture properly, principally because they do not bring into use other scriptural texts and other sources (like the Haggadah, glosses, and Aramaic [Chaldean] translations) to arrive at the correct interpretation of certain passages of Scripture. He claims that if they read the prophets and other literature, they could, with the help of the Holy Spirit, be illuminated and come to the truth of the scriptures. As Augustine states, they fail to recognize the context of these passages to illuminate the meaning of the words.<sup>59</sup> He has obtained this insight

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<sup>58</sup> This presumption goes back to the friars of the thirteenth century. See J. Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*.

<sup>59</sup> *Sancti Aurelii Augustini De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, ed. Almut Mutzenbecher, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 44a (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975), 184. "Non enim posset eis error oboriri palliatus nomine christiano nisi de scripturis non intellectis (Their error, to be sure, could not spring up clothed with the name Christian except from a failure to understand the Scriptures)." Augustine, *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, trans. David L. Mosher, Fathers of the Church (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press of America, 1977), 70:166.

about the Jews from the Jewish converts Petrus Alfonsi, Alfonso de Valladolid (Abner of Burgos), and Jerome de Santa Fe, from whom he states he has borrowed much because these authors recognized the truth of the Catholic faith and the (Jewish) errors.<sup>60</sup> Besides his personal relationship with a contemporary Jewish person, it is evident that Alonso also learned about Jewish literature from these writers.<sup>61</sup> Apparently he had an abundance of material available to him to write the *Fortalitium Fidei* and thus help Jews recognize their errors and come to embrace Christian truth.

The Jews have, thirdly, an undue attachment to their parents, spouses, and children, who hinder their embrace of the true faith—not to mention their love of riches. Alonso tells us at this point about a certain wise Jewish person (*quidam de sapientioribus Iudeis*) who came to him for four years to discuss the secrets of the law, scripture, Talmud, and philosophy. Alonso claims that this Jewish person seriously wanted to embrace the Christian faith, but his love of his father prevented him from doing so.<sup>62</sup>

The fourth and last impediment for conversion is their great inclination to hold fast to the opinions, constitutions, ceremonies, and customs found in the Talmud with which they have been nourished throughout their entire lives. Borrowing a verse from Jeremiah 13—“Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?”<sup>63</sup>—Alonso

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<sup>60</sup> Alonso's text reads: “Unde hereses sunt orte per se legendo, que conferendo repulse sunt quia conferentes diversas sententias adduxerunt, que ex se invicem mutuo inveniri potuerunt, qualiter essent intelligende et hoc modo meruerunt cognoscere veritatem et venire ad viam salutis Venerabilis Petrus Alfonsi et Magister Alfonsus et Magister Iohannes et Hieronimus de Sancta Fide, de quibus sepe est facta mentio in isto volumine qui solennia opera fecerunt recognoscentes veritatem fidei catholice et errorem in quo fuerant involuti.” Fol. CLXXXIvb. On Alonso's sources, see McMichael, *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah?*, 57-92; and McMichael, “The Sources for Alfonso de Espina's Messianic Argument,” 72-95.

<sup>61</sup> The work of Ginio and Echevarria and my own research have confirmed this judgment that almost all of Alonso's Jewish material in the *Fortalitium Fidei* derives from earlier Christian polemical literature. See especially Netanyahu, “Alonso de Espina: Was He a New Christian?”; and Ginio, *La forteresse de la foi*, 203-7.

<sup>62</sup> Alonso's Latin text reads: “Unde expertus sum in hoc casu cum venerit ad me quidam de sapientioribus Iudeis istius regni qui mecum conferens de secretis legis, affirmavit se veraciter credere fidem Christi, et quod ad hoc inductus erat diligenti studio scripturarum non solum Biblie sed etiam Thalmuth et philosophorum. Cumque ab eo quarerem quare non efficiebatur Christianus. Respondit quod immo summe desiderabat hoc implere. Sed quia habebant patrem qui cum tenerrime diligebat. Cognitans quod cum sciret patre tristitia moreretur. Dixit quod non poterat vincere seipsum nisi faceret cum consensu patris.” Fol. CLXXXIvb.

<sup>63</sup> Alonso's commentary on Jeremiah 13:23: “*Si mutare potest ethiops pellem suam, scilicet mutare, quasi dicat non potest mutare nigredinem suam. Secundum exemplum est de*

concludes this first section by stating that the Jews cannot acknowledge Christian truth because it is against their very nature as Jews. Since they have been brought up in the habit of sinning, their inclination for evil is such that an act of free will toward the good is almost impossible for them. Only the grace of God can effect in such persons a recognition that spiritual goods are better than temporal goods. They also have the possibility of recognizing that true hope is in the salvation of their souls and for the good, final, and eternal blessedness of the just, which they receive through the invitation of Christ, who said: "No one can come to me unless the Father draws him" (John 6:66).

In the second section, Alonso then asks whether those Jews who want to convert to the Christian faith need to be received by Christians. He answers that they should be accepted because, even if they enter the Church with a less than admirable intention, they have a greater possibility to accept that Christian truth within the Church than outside it. The intention of the Jews who come to the Christian faith, however, should be examined because some Jews have entered the church for temporal gain (*lucrum temporale*) rather than out of true faith. Since the *res* (essential nature) of the sacrament is grace and since true faith is born of goodwill, everything is therefore centered on the will of the Jew who has the possibility of arriving at Christian truth. Alonso states that "the wise ones" of Israel hold that one should work according to the Law, even if one's intention is not good, because one may eventually arrive at good intention. Thus, the Jews may come to embrace the Christian faith with God's help by actually practicing it, receiving a sign from God, experiencing a tribulation so that they return to the good, learning through the study of scriptures and other books, or through evangelical preaching. He concludes this section by stating that even if the *iudaica perfidia* cannot be removed in the first generation of converts, their sons and descendents will have a better chance of fully embracing the Catholic truth and of being saved.

In section 3 of chapter 12, Alonso asks the following question: If Jews are to be received, how should they be received? Alonso admits that it is difficult to discern whether they have been moved to a pure and sincere conversion by the Holy Spirit. Perhaps they have received the faith by bad intention. He quotes the canon on Jewish conversion, which states that even though their unfaithfulness (*perfidia*) frequently "leads them

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*pardo qui non potest mutare varietatem pellis sue.*" Fol. CLXXXIra. The Douay-Rheims English translation for the most part is used throughout this article.



back to their vomit" (Prov. 26:11), they should enter the catechumenate for eight months and then, only with great caution, be baptized.<sup>64</sup> In the case of sickness during this time, they should be baptized. Alonso declares that converted Jews, after a time of abstinence and penitence, should be baptized on Sunday or a feast day. He also determines that, should Jewish servants of a Christian master convert to the true faith, they should be set free. This decision is confirmed, according to Alonso, by the canonists Raymond of Penyafort, Gotfridus of Trani, and Hostiensis.<sup>65</sup>

In relation to this crucial step in conversion, Alonso asks in the fourth section whether the Jews should be compelled to receive baptism. Alonso answers in the affirmative for children, based on the principle that, if the state should be in need of soldiers, a ruler can take children from their parents, raise them, and instruct them on fighting. Given the present crisis, which was like a war, and the imminence of Antichrist, the same principle can be applied to the matter of baptizing Jewish children. Alonso admits that some say this should not be done because the church has held that they should not be baptized, but this is not a valid reason, as new teachings (*institui*) were being established everyday by the church for the health of the community. Some others argue against this because of the prophecy of Isaiah, who foretold that a remnant of the Jews would be saved (Rom. 11:26), but this too is not valid because this "remnant" might be faithful Jews who convert to Christianity or a small group of Jews who await salvation on a remote island, far away from Christians.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> According to Alexander of Hales, the *Decretum* decrees that eight months was to be spent in the catechumenate for Jews, and, "if they are known to enter into pure faith, only then shall they merit the grace of baptism." Chazan, *Church, State and Jews in the Middle Ages*, 50. Raymond of Penyafort states that "Jews seeking baptism should be tested forty days in penitence and abstinence, as in the *Decretum*." Ibid., 39.

<sup>65</sup> Alonso is very aware of canon law, as he devotes an entire section of Book III (chap. 11) to the canon law and the Jews entitled "Undecima consideratio tractat de Judeorum obligatione ex iure canonico et civiti ac ordinatione regia." (The eleventh chapter concerns what the Jews are obliged to do according to canon law, civil law, and ordinances of the realm.)

<sup>66</sup> As a recent study on Jewish conversion states: "On the other hand, both the New and Old Testaments, as well as the doctrine of Jewish witness, require that a remnant of Jews be allowed to exist within Christendom until the Final Days. What, then, is Scotus' solution? While technically staying within the boundaries of orthodox Christian teaching, Scotus chooses to distort the biblical command that a remnant of Jews must be present at the Second Coming; with an almost breathtaking literalism Scotus suggests that a handful of Jews (*aliquos paucos*) be taken and placed on an island somewhere (*aliqua insula*) and there be allowed to go on practicing their faith. Apparently, as far as Scotus is concerned, allowing a few Jews to live sequestered on an island is all that is

In regard to adults, Alonso agrees with John Duns Scotus, who said that all should be compelled to the faith, since it is better for them to be compelled to behave well than to do evil with impunity (as they themselves act).<sup>67</sup> In accepting the position of Scotus, Alonso rejects the position of Thomas Aquinas, who held that there were two basic arguments against the forcible baptism of children: the possibility that children could later relapse back into Judaism (which constitutes a graver sin, apostasy) and forced baptism goes against natural justice.<sup>68</sup>

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required of a Christian society in order to fulfill God's command requiring the continued existence of Jews." Nancy Turner, "Jewish Witness, Forced Conversion, and Island Living: John Duns Scotus on Jews and Judaism," in *Christian Attitudes toward Jews in the Middle Ages*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York: Routledge Publishing, 2006).

<sup>67</sup> The issue of the baptism of children comes up in the *Decretum*. Jewish men who marry Christian women must convert to Christianity if they want to remain in union with them. "Children who are born to such parents are to follow the faith and condition of the mother. Likewise those who are born of infidel women and Christian men are to follow the Christian faith, rather than the Jewish superstition." Furthermore, "[c]hildren are to be removed from the fellowship of parents, lest they become entrapped in their errors. . . . They are instead to be sent to monasteries or God-fearing Christian women or men so that through contact with them they may become acquainted with the religion of faith and, better instructed in manners and in faith, they may improve themselves." Chazan, *Church, State and Jews in the Middle Ages*, 24.

<sup>68</sup> *Summa Theologicae*, 2a2ae.10.12 (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1947). Alonso states that a certain Guilielmus also agreed with Thomas Aquinas that children should not be baptized. This may be Guillaume de Bourges in his *Bellum Domini contra Judaeos et Sadducaeos*. Thomas states: "One is on account of the danger to the faith. For children baptized before coming to the use of reason, afterwards when they come to perfect age, might easily be persuaded by their parents to renounce what they had unknowingly embraced; and this would be detrimental to the faith. The other reason is that it is against natural justice. For a child is by nature part of its father: thus, at first, it is not distinct from its parents as to its body, so long as it is enfolded within its mother's womb; and later on after birth, and before it has the use of its free-will, it is enfolded in the care of its parents, which is like a spiritual womb, for so long as man has not the use of reason, he differs not from an irrational animal; so that even as an ox or a horse belongs to someone who, according to the civil law, can use them when he likes, as his own instrument, so, according to the natural law, a son, before coming to the use of reason, is under his father's care. Hence it would be contrary to natural justice, if a child, before coming to the use of reason, were to be taken away from its parents' custody, or anything done to it against its parents' wish. As soon, however, as it begins to have the use of its free-will, it begins to belong to itself, and is able to look after itself, in matters concerning the Divine or the natural law, and then it should be induced, not by compulsion but by persuasion, to embrace the faith: it can then consent to the faith, and be baptized, even against its parents' wish; but not before it comes to the use of reason. Hence it is said of the children of the fathers of old that they were saved in the faith of their parents; whereby we are given to understand that it is the parents' duty to look after the salvation of their children, especially before they come to the use of reason."

The issue of forced baptism is very controversial in fifteenth-century Spain, as Alonso will acknowledge in the next section of his text.<sup>69</sup> The standard position of the church in the Middle Ages was:

We decree that no Christian shall use violence to force [the Jews] to be baptized as long as they are unwilling and refuse. However, if any one of them seeks refuge among Christians by reason of faith, after his willingness has become quite clear, he shall be made a Christian without subjecting himself to any calumny. For surely one who is known to have come to Christian baptism not willing, but against his wishes, cannot be believed to possess the faith of Christ.<sup>70</sup>

Jews were to be induced “by authoritative texts, by reason, and by blandishments rather than by harshness, to accept anew the Christian faith.”<sup>71</sup> In the thirteenth century, the Christian mission to Jews took on a new dimension when the mendicants forced Jews to attend their sermons and disputations, as happened in Barcelona in 1263. But a major problem arises when a Jew is forced into baptism. What becomes the standard to judge these cases is the distinction made between conditional and absolute force. After stating that forced baptism is not pleasing to the Lord (*Decretum*), Raymond of Penyafort made the follow distinction:

If however, forced conditionally, for instance by threats or by confiscation of property of their goods or by flogging or by other similar force,

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<sup>69</sup> The Spanish church had previously addressed this issue of forced baptism in the seventh century in the context of the forced conversion of Jews by King Sisebut. Canon 57 of the Fourth Council of Toledo in 633 addressed this issue: “Concerning the Jews, the holy synod has decreed henceforth to compel no one to accept the faith, because God has compassion for whom he wishes and renders obstinate whom he wishes; for not against their will should such people be saved, but with their consent, so that the semblance of justice be kept intact. Just as man, obeying the serpent of his own free will was ruined, so a man is saved through believing—owing to the call of God’s grace and the conversion of his own mind. Therefore, rather than be subdued they should be urged to covert, not under compulsion but through the power of their free will. Those, however, who were previously coerced to become Christian, as happened at the time of the most pious ruler Sisebut, for it is now a fact that they, having been admitted to the divine sacraments, have received the grace of baptism, have been anointed with chrism, and have partaken of the body and blood of the Lord—they should appropriately be forced to retain the faith which they adopted, albeit through compulsion or out of necessity, lest the Lord’s name be blasphemed, and the faith which they have adopted be deemed vile and contemptible.” J. Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, 102.

<sup>70</sup> Chazan, *Church, State and Jews in the Middle Ages*, 31. This is canon law from the *Decretals* of Raymond of Penyafort, a Dominican friar who compiled a code of canon law for Pope Gregory IX in the 1230s.

<sup>71</sup> Chazan, *Church, State and Jews in the Middle Ages*, 38.

they accept the sacrament of baptism and afterward leave our faith, they must be compelled to return, lest the name of the Lord be blasphemed and the faith, which they accepted be held vile and contemptible, as in the Decretum. I have said this when they are conditionally forced. For, if they were absolutely forced, for instance if they were violently dragged off and water poured over them, then the essence of baptism is not conferred, as in the decretal collections [early collections of papal decrees].<sup>72</sup>

The problem of forced conversions appeared in 1391 in Seville and subsequently throughout the entire Iberian Peninsula, when Jews were given the choice of "baptism or death." These *conversos* (later labeled with the derogatory term *marranos*, or "renegade," by Christians) were a cause of much suspicion, and some church leaders felt the need to assure that their conversions were valid and real, especially in the latter half of the fifteenth century.<sup>73</sup> These suspicions led to the riots instigated by "Old Christians" in 1449 in Castile, which continued sporadically into the 1470s.<sup>74</sup>

In the fifth section of chapter 12, Alonso concerns himself with the penalty that is to be handed out to judaizing *conversos*, those false Christians whom Alonso thought were seriously threatening the Christian society of his day. Alonso believed they had broken their contract. He refers to the civil law (*lex regni*), which in medieval Spain was codified in a legal text called the *Fuero Juzgo*.<sup>75</sup> These laws were supposed to regulate

<sup>72</sup> Chazan, *Church, State and Jews in the Middle Ages*, 38.

<sup>73</sup> The term *marrano* has been understood to mean "pig," but this has been seriously challenged by Norman Roth in his *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews*, 3-14.

<sup>74</sup> On the Toledan rebellion of 1449, see J. N. Hillgarth's chapter in *The Spanish Kingdoms, 1250-1516* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 126-59. On the historical, cultural, and theological issues involved in the 1449 statutes controversy, see Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez, "Prelude to the Inquisition: The Discourse of Persecution, the Toledan Rebellion of 1449, and the Contest for Orthodoxy," in *Strategies of Medieval Communal Identity: Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. Wout J. van Bekkum and Paul M. Cobb (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 47-74.

<sup>75</sup> Joseph F. O'Callaghan states: "The most sophisticated and comprehensive codification promulgated in any of the barbarian kingdoms, the *Liber Iudiciorum* continued to serve the Christian peoples of the peninsula until the revival in the twelfth century of Roman law embodied in Justinian's Code. In the thirteenth century, on the order of Fernando III of Castile, the *Liber Iudiciorum* was translated into Castilian under the title *Fuero Juzgo* and given to Córdoba and other cities as their municipal law." *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), 65. Alonso is mostly likely drawing from the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X, 7.4, "De los Judíos," for his position on judaizing *conversos*. On the laws of Alfonso X (d. 1284), see Dwayne E. Carpenter, *Alfonso X and the Jews: An Edition of and Commentary on Siete Partidas* 7.24 "De los Judíos" (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986).

Christians, Jews, and *conversos* living in Spain at the time and meant death for those *conversos* who returned to Judaism.<sup>76</sup>

To combat such a threat, Alonso states: "I believe that if a true inquisition would spring up especially at this time that innumerable [Jews] would be delivered to the flames, [especially] those who are discovered to be really judaizing, who, if they are not punished here most crudely, how greatly they will burn in the eternal fire."<sup>77</sup> Talk of the Inquisition at this point demonstrates how urgently Alonso felt something had to be done about the "Jewish problem." Jews threatened to weaken Christians at a point in time which was very crucial—the end times! Christians were weakened by the internal problems and doubts that had arisen among heretics (which Alonso discusses in Book II of the  *Fortalitium Fidei* —many of these heresies are associated with *conversos*) and from without by Jews and Muslims. Alonso de Espina got his wish post-mortem when the National Spanish Inquisition was established in 1478 by Pope Sixtus IV. The Inquisition officially began its work in 1481 as an attempt to deal not only with *conversos* but also with the threat of Jews who were encouraging the apostasy of these converts.

A review of these first five sections, therefore, shows that Alonso was very much concerned about Jewish conversion and the Jewish threat to Christians in the contemporary situation of his own day. These Jews were stuck in their own Jewish tradition, and it was nearly impossible for them to see the errors of their ways and come to acknowledge the Christian truth. Even their conversion was problematic, and it seemed that only divine intervention would bring about that change. As we shall see, Alonso thought he was living in the final age and therefore saw a great need to deal with the Jewish threat, though God would act decisively on the Jews during this last age. The concluding three sections of the twelfth chapter of Book III concern the final age.

### *Alonso de Espina's Apocalyptic Presentation*

The sixth section of the last chapter of Book III of the  *Fortalitium Fidei*  deals with the identity of Antichrist—that is, his origin, relationship with

<sup>76</sup> On this fact, see the comments of Ginio in  *De bello iudaeorum* , 97. Alonso's text has "Fuero Nizgo." Fol. CLXXXIIra.

<sup>77</sup> Alonso's text reads: "Credo quod si vera fieret inquisitio presertim isto tempore quod innumerales ignibus traderentur de his qui iudaizare realiter invenirentur, qui si hic non puniantur crudelius quam publici Iudei eternis ignibus cremabuntur." Fol. CLXXXIIIv.

the devil, rise to power and arrival in Jerusalem, and how the Jews would come to accept him.<sup>78</sup> Drawing upon earlier apocalyptic literature, Alonso de Espina believes that Antichrist will be born in Babylon or from the tribe of Dan.<sup>79</sup> Alonso does not offer any information on Antichrist's parents—he mentions only his mother in passing—but does speak of the different theories concerning Satan's involvement with Antichrist and comes to the conclusion that Satan will have an influence over him but will not possess him totally (as the divine nature is to the human nature in Christ).<sup>80</sup> When Antichrist reaches the age of discretion, Satan will then take complete possession of him, at which point Satan will be "released" (*soluendus*) (Rev. 20:7); he will exercise all his old power that was given to him; and he will then instruct Antichrist in all evil arts.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> On Antichrist in the Middle Ages, see McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years*; and Roberto Rusconi, "Antichrist and Antichrists," in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 2, 287-325. Alonso de Espina borrows much from Adso (ca. 910-92) and his *Letter on the Origin and Life of the Antichrist*, found in McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 82-87. Alonso never mentions Adso by name; therefore, it is likely that he obtained this information from a later edition of this text. As McGinn notes on p. 84: "In a manner similar to other key texts in the history of apocalypticism, Adso's *Letter* was edited, adapted, and revised extensively in the succeeding centuries." For apocalyptic thought in Spain in particular but without a discussion of Alonso, see José Guadalajara Medina, *Las profecías del Anticristo en la Edad Media* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1996).

<sup>79</sup> Antichrist's relationship with the tribe of Dan is based on Genesis 49:17: "Dan shall be a serpent in the way." Alonso refers to Blessed Isidore, who has made this identification and stated that the tribe is therefore not to be reckoned with according to the number of witnesses in Apocalypse 7. Bede states that Dan was passed over because Antichrist will be born from that tribe. Alonso does not mention him specifically as being born as a Jew, as others have it in the Middle Ages. On this issue, see Richard E. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), 79. Saint Jerome was a Christian writer who associated Antichrist with the Jews: "Jerome's understanding of Antichrist is explicitly anti-Jewish. Asked why God will permit such power and miracles to Antichrist, he responds that God has allowed this so that the Jews who refused to accept Christ, the Truth, will now be convicted by their acceptance of the Lie. Antichrist will be born from Jewish stock and of a virgin, in parody of Christ. In recounting the details of his career, Jerome emphasizes a theme that was to have a large future: Antichrist's path to universal power is paved by gold as much as by terror." McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years*, 74-75.

<sup>80</sup> Peter Comestor states that from the moment of his conception the Devil descends into the uterus of the mother to whom the boy will be born, with whom he will grow up, and by whom he will be nourished. Alonso acknowledges that others say that he will have an angel with him until the year of discretion. See Peter Comestor, *Historia Scholastica, Liber Danielis*, (cap. vi), *Patrologia Latina*, 198, p. 1454.

<sup>81</sup> Here and in following citations from the *Fortalitium Fidei*, Book III, chapter 12:6-8, the reader is referred to the complete Latin text of this important section published here as an appendix. The reason for including the Latin text is to provide easy access for

The Jews enter this apocalyptic scenario as Antichrist proceeds to the Caspian Mountains, where he encounters the Queen of the Amazons who guards the “children of Israel” (the ten lost tribes) who were enclosed by Alexander the Great between two camps or fortresses (*castra*) called *guth* and *maguth* (Gog and Magog).<sup>82</sup> These enclosed Jews are endowed with the horrible characteristics of the ‘unclean peoples’: naked savages, they live on raw meat and on the fruit of trees. These forces, which, including the Jews, number twenty-four kingdoms, will be released into the world under the leadership of Antichrist.<sup>83</sup> Antichrist will then proceed to Jerusalem, gathering many Jews who were dispersed throughout the world along the way (descendants of Benjamin and Judah). There he will circumcise himself and then proclaim to the Jews that he is the Christ promised in the Law. Alonso comments that in this way he will deceive them into believing that he truly is the Christ and that Jesus of Nazareth was a deceiver (*deceptorem*, or a pseudo-Christ) and a magician (*magus*). Because of their great desire for the coming of the Messiah, from whom they expect to be liberated from captivity, the Jews will be deceived by the signs shown to them by Antichrist and be enticed by his promises. Because they will see Antichrist in all his prosperity and glory, they will stream together unto him.<sup>84</sup> According to

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the reader to this apocalyptic section without having to refer to the early incunabula or to the photographic facsimiles of the fifteenth-century editions on the cervantesvirtual Web site, <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com>.

<sup>82</sup> The identity of Gog and Magog are dealt with in the thirteenth-century Franciscan tradition, as Burr explains: “[I]n reporting a series of views concerning the identity of God and Magog (Rev. 20:7), Alexander and Hugh say that, according to the Jews, they are people in the east who will come at the end to attack Jerusalem. They add that the Jews expect Jerusalem to be rebuilt at that time by their Messiah and look forward to living in glory for one thousand years, then being transferred into heaven.” “The Antichrist and the Jews,” 27. Burr adds that another Franciscan apocalyptic commentator, Vital du Four, “offers as one current interpretation that they are a people heretofore imprisoned within the Caspian Mountains who will go to Jerusalem in the time of the antichrist, but he does not mention the Jews.” *Ibid.*, 27 n. 16.

<sup>83</sup> See A. R. Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Enclosed Nations* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1932).

<sup>84</sup> “There is evidence in the records of the Spanish Inquisition that the messianic expectations widely held among the harassed Marranos, or crypto-Jews during the fifteenth century were interpreted as relating to Antichrist. The two themes were intimately associated by Church dialecticians. Early in the Christian era it was pointed out that ‘if Jew was the Messiah, the only person for whom the Jews could be waiting would be, by their own method of arguing also, Antichrist.’ An eleventh-century formula of renunciation of Judaism requires the convert to anathematize ‘all those who hope for the coming of the Messiah, or rather of Antichrist’; the context links this declaration definitely with the Jewish tradition concerning the Messiah.” Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and*

Alonso, "by a vast blindness [and] error, therefore, they will receive him as their true messiah and worship him as God, and as the king and Lord he will be feared by them."<sup>85</sup> For this reason, Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 calls Antichrist "the man of lawlessness, the son of perdition who opposes and is exalted above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God."

In reference to the temple mentioned in this Pauline letter, Alonso states that some say Antichrist will rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, but others more rightly think that he will refer to himself as the temple of God, as the phrase from 2 Thessalonians 2:4 indicates: "showing himself as if he were God." Augustine supposedly supports this claim when he argues that, whereas the phrase in Latin is *in templo*, that is, "in the temple of God he sits," the Greek is *in templum*, or "for the temple of God," as if he himself were the Temple of God.<sup>86</sup>

From the preceding discussion, one could accept the argument that Antichrist will be a *falsus Christianus* and will fashion himself as a man of the church, who will be most adaptable for injuring the church because, as Augustine says, "for the temple of God," means "in the manner of the church."<sup>87</sup> Francis of Mayronis (ca. 1288-1328) adds that to draw Christians and Jews more easily to his rite, Antichrist will hold this rite on Sunday for the sake of Christians and on Saturday for the sake of the Jews.<sup>88</sup> Alonso refers to canon law that prohibited work on Sundays—it appears that Antichrist will be very careful to follow canon law in this case.<sup>89</sup> At this stage in Alonso's apocalyptic scenario, Antichrist will have come into full power and will have converted many Jews and Christians to his cause.

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*the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Anti-Semitism* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1943), 32.

<sup>85</sup> For the Latin text, see this article's appendix.

<sup>86</sup> Alonso's presentation of Antichrist finds common roots in the thirteenth-century Franciscan apocalyptic tradition, which also drew upon previous apocalyptic tradition to gather information on the role of the Jews. On these earlier friars, see Burr, "The Antichrist and the Jews," 24.

<sup>87</sup> *The City of God*, book 20, chap. 19.

<sup>88</sup> Francis of Mayronis was a disciple of Scotus. Entitled by later history as "Doctor Illuminatus" or "Doctor Acutus," he studied at Paris and produced many books, a commentary on the logic and physics of Aristotle, *Sermones de tempore*, *Sermones de laudibus Sanctorum et dominicales*, *Scripta in quattuor libros Sententiarum*, and *Quodlibeta*. The passage Alonso is borrowing from is his *Fourth Book of the Sentences*, distinction 48, question 2.

<sup>89</sup> As it appears in Alonso's text: "Decretis de Conse., distinction 3, pervenit." On the issue of Sunday and work, see James A. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London: Longman Publishing Group, 1995), 83.



In this seventh section of chapter 12, Alonso then asks two important questions: First, how will the Jews come to the knowledge of the deception of Antichrist and be converted to the Catholic faith? And second, is this final conversion foretold by the prophets in the Hebrew scriptures? Concerning the Jew's discovery that they have been deceived by Antichrist, Alonso continues his presentation of the events that will mark the end times. The witnesses Enoch and Elijah will make their appearance in Jerusalem and begin preaching against Antichrist. Alonso states: "In the presence of all people they will make clear the deception of the Devil, disclose his deceit and falsity, and open the hidden treasure to the Jews of the truth concerning the saving faith of Jesus Christ, as thus it is said in the last chapter of Malachi [4:6]: 'They will turn the hearts of fathers to their children.'" Alonso adds the gloss to the verse, which reads: "for the instruction of the future generation concerning the faith of the savior in whom they themselves believed."<sup>90</sup> The text of Malachi continues: "and the hearts of the children to their fathers"; the gloss to the verse reads: "who will receive the faith which they had possessed." Now that the Jews finally have been converted to Christianity, they and the Christians will be in harmony on the religious level, being equal then in Christ.

Alonso then presents the situation of the Jews after their conversion: "If therefore the Jews, knowing that they themselves have been deceived, will believe in Christ, they are ready to die for him, as Methodius, chapter 44 says: 'Thousands of men out of every tribe of Israel are killed for Christ.'" At this point, the two witnesses, Elijah and Enoch, also appear as a confirmation of the conversion of the Jews as a fulfillment of Revelation 11:3-4: "I give two of my witnesses and they will prophecy for a thousand and two hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth, these are the two olive trees and two lamp stands." Alonso then interprets this passage:

"I give two of my witnesses," namely Elijah and Enoch, "and they will prophesy," that is, they will preach "for a thousand and two hundred and sixty days"—the gloss [reads], that is three years, just as Christ himself preached; "clothed in sackcloth," that is, preaching penance and showing example; "these are the two olive trees," that is, the anointing of the Holy Spirit; "and two lamp stands," that is, the light being given to others.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> For the Latin text, see the appendix.

<sup>91</sup> For the Latin text, see the appendix.

But Antichrist will make a final appearance: after he sees that they are confused and that these things are being detected, his malice will result in the form of a public persecution in which he will kill the Jews in Jerusalem. "[T]heir bodies will lie down on the streets . . . for three days and three nights and a half" (Rev. 11:8), because no one will risk burying their bodies for fear of Antichrist, so that whoever would see (them) would fear to be made like them (i.e., dead). The killers were joyous because of these deaths. But "after three days and a half," the dead will arise and hear the voices of angels saying to Elijah and Enoch: "Come up hither," and with those (enemies) watching, "they went up to heaven in a cloud." This event, Alonso contends, will greatly confirm that the Jews were converted to the faith in Christ through these two witnesses. But they will be confirmed further by the death of Antichrist, who will die according to that gloss on the Apostle's scriptural word: "[F]or three years and half he will reign."<sup>92</sup> Alonso then focuses his attention on the meaning of these three and a half years:

Whence Daniel 12:7 [states]: "The angel swears for ever that it would be for a time," namely, of one year; "and times," namely, of two years; "and half a time," that is, a half of a year, namely, the Antichrist will reign; and then the gloss says that this interval is called "the desolation to be endured under the Antichrist." Why however he will reign in such a way was declared by Christ in Matthew 24:22, where it is said that "unless those days had been shortened, no human being would be saved," upon which the gloss says that this tribulation will be as oppressive as it will be brief. And Gregory [the Great] states that the proud and infirm see [God] will mercifully shorten those days which the evil one inflicted upon each of them.<sup>93</sup>

At this point, the final actions of Antichrist come into play. Antichrist will rise up and kill Enoch and Elijah, the two witnesses, in Jerusalem

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<sup>92</sup> For the Latin text, see the appendix. Alonso's entire presentation on Enoch and Elijah appears to follow closely the outline of an anonymous critic of Peter John Olivi. Burr provides the outline of this anonymous scholar's presentation. In response to Olivi's view that "the widespread conversions will begin before the death of the antichrist, the anonymous critic's objection hinges on the fact that he see Enoch and Elijah as the key players in Jewish conversion. The antichrist will come, then Enoch and Elijah. The latter will be killed by the antichrist but will then be resurrected. Up to that point the Jews will accept the antichrist as their messiah, but once they witness the resurrection of Enoch and Elijah, they will see they have been deceived and will desert the antichrist for Christianity. The assumption here is that up to that moment the Jews will support the antichrist more or less as a group, although the anonymous critic never explicitly says a much." "The Antichrist and the Jews," 34.

<sup>93</sup> For the Latin text, see the appendix.

and he will live for another three and a half years. This time period the gloss to Daniel calls *desolatio duratura sub Antichristo* (the last desolation under the Antichrist).<sup>94</sup> At the end of this time period, Antichrist will set up his tent and throne on the Mount of Olives. Then the Lord Jesus Christ will reveal himself to him, and “the Spirit of his mouth will kill him” (2 Thess. 2:8)—that is, by the virtue of his command. As Alonso envisions the final scene, Antichrist will be killed by Michael the Archangel, while Jesus is calling out in the air. This event, Alonso holds, will signify the final and total conversion (or confirmation of the conversion) of the Jews to the Christian faith.<sup>95</sup>

Alonso asks at this point if the death of Antichrist marks the time when Christ will immediately come to judge the earth, which he answers in the negative, since according to the gloss on Daniel 11, forty days are granted for the refreshment of the saints and the punishment of the destroyers.<sup>96</sup> But he admits that no one knows how long the interval will be between the forty days and the end of the world.<sup>97</sup> But certain ministers of Antichrist will remain after his death, who will rejoice and say: “Although our leader may be dead, nevertheless we have peace and prosperity.”<sup>98</sup> And, with such things having been said, sudden

<sup>94</sup> Alonso may be referring here to the “Abomination of Desolation” based on Hippolytus’s commentary on Daniel. See McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years*, 62.

<sup>95</sup> Alonso does not add that there will be a final evil onslaught led by Gog and Magog (Rev. 20:8) before the Last Judgment and the end of the world.

<sup>96</sup> On these forty days, see Emerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, 105. In his examination of fourteenth-century Franciscan apocalyptic commentaries, Burr comments: “The seventh period [of church history] is seen by our commentators as a genuine period after the death of Antichrist in which there will be peace, holy men will be allowed to preach freely, humankind will receive a final chance to repent, and the Jews will be converted. All except [Peter John] Olivi have this interval not on the millennium of Apocalypse 20 but on Jerome’s interpretation of Daniel 12, which allows a period of forty-five days. They often follow a variant in this tradition in speaking of forty rather than forty-five days, and they also often follow the developing tradition in seeing it as a minimum figure to which God can add more time if he wishes.” “Mendicant Readings of the Apocalypse,” in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 95. See also Lerner, “Refreshment of the Saints: The Time after Antichrist as a Station for Earthly Progress in Medieval Thought,” *Traditio* 32 (1976): 97-144; and Lerner, “The Medieval Return to the Thousand-Year Sabbath,” in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, 51-71.

<sup>97</sup> As Adso states: “No man knows how great a space of time there may be after they have finished this penance until the Lord comes to judge. It remains in the disposition of God, who will judge the world at that hour which he predestined for judgment before the ages.” *Visions of the End*, 87.

<sup>98</sup> Alonso apparently borrowed this idea of the survival of the ministers of Antichrist from Hugh Ripelin of Strassburg, O.P., *Compendium Theologicae veritatis* (ca. 1265). See Lerner, “Refreshment of the Saints,” 122 n. 83.

destruction will come upon them, and then the church will rest pacified until the end of the world, as the falsity and the cruelty of the devil have finally come to an end.

Alonso then goes on to demonstrate in the second part of the seventh section that the prophets (citing specifically Isa. 10:22 and Hos. 3:3-5) foretold the final conversion of the Jews, a testimony which he finds confirmed in the Targum, the Talmud, and the commentaries of the early rabbis. The passage of Isaiah 10:22—"For though your people Israel be as the sand of the sea only a remnant of them will return—confirms that there was foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures the hope of a remnant that will be converted at the end of time.<sup>99</sup> In his commentary on Hosea 3:3-5, which is a direct borrowing from fellow Franciscan Nicholas of Lyra (1270-1349), Alonso shows that Hosea foretold both the status of the Jews from the time of the Ascension of Christ until the end of the age and their final conversion. The status of contemporary Jews is shown in the first verses of Hosea 3:3-5: "Thou shall wait for me many days: thou shall not play the harlot, and thou shall be no man's, and I also will wait for thee. For the children of Israel shall sit many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without altar, and without ephod, and without seraphim."<sup>100</sup>

Hosea 3:5 testifies also to the final conversion of the Jews: "And after this the children of Israel shall return, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and they shall fear the Lord and his goodness

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<sup>99</sup> Alonso drew support for his presentation on the final conversion of the Jews from Habakkuk 2:3, Isaiah 30:18, and the rabbinic text *Pereth Heleus*.

<sup>100</sup> Alonso's commentary reads: "The text begins 'you will await for me for many days,' which indicates that the Jewish people are expecting the messiah. While waiting they 'will not play the harlot,' because the Jews do not worship idols. The text of Hosea continues: 'and belong to another man,' who is Christ from whom they are separated because of their unbelief. This 'man' is spoken of in Jeremiah 31:22, 'a woman shall compass a man,' in the womb of her uterus [of course, referring to Jesus in the womb of Mary]. The text of Hosea 3 continues: 'but I await for you,' with the 'I' referring to God, who expects the final conversion of the Jews; consequently, Hosea states that 'the children of Israel shall sit many days without king and without prince,' meaning they will have no leader as is obvious from viewing the current Jewish political experience: they do not have their own king or leader but they serve other kings and leaders. The Jews are 'without sacrifice' and are 'without altar' because they cannot sacrifice outside of Jerusalem, from whence they were expelled and the temple was destroyed. They are 'without *ephod*,' that is, without priestly vestments, because the haughty sacrifices have ceased; and they are 'without seraphim,' that is, in images in which the demons are accustomed to give answers, and among the Jews there are no such things." This is the situation of the Jews until the end of time according to Alonso's reading of Hosea 3:3-4 in the last chapter of Book III. See the appendix for Alonso's Latin text.

in the last days.”<sup>101</sup> Alonso’s apocalyptic presentation concludes with the fulfillment of these prophetic passages from Hosea about the final conversion of the Jews.

The eighth and last section asks the question of whether, by certain signs, the time of Antichrist can be known. Alonso answers that it is presumptuous for us to ask the question, as Augustine had stated earlier in *The City of God*.<sup>102</sup> Alonso then observes that those who have calculated the arrival of Antichrist have all been wrong, such as Arnau de Villanova (ca. 1240-1311), who had calculated that he was to arrive around 1400; another famous preacher (Vincent Ferrer?) said that he was to be born in 1410; and another “Parisian” put the date at halfway through 1408.<sup>103</sup> Alonso concludes that “it is manifestly clear that in designating the time of the coming of Antichrist all of these [individuals] are in error and all others will error who shall presume to calculate the aforementioned time [of the arrival of Antichrist].”

These individuals are not presumptuous, however, if they inquire about the signs which are to signal the arrival of Antichrist. There is a long history in apocalyptic thought determining the signs of the end times according to scripture. Alonso points out nine signs derived from Scripture, the first of which is the general disturbance of the whole world (Dan. 12:1) and the great tribulation spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 24. The second sign is the schism of the church (Matt. 24:12), and the third is the multiplication of vices (2 Tim. 3:1-5). The fourth sign is the neglect or contempt of sane doctrine, found in 2 Timothy 4:3-4: “For the time is coming when the people will not endure sound teaching,

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<sup>101</sup> Alonso’s commentary: “‘And after this’ refers to the casting off and blinding of the Jews. Hosea foretells then the return of the Children of Israel from their error, ‘and they shall seek the Lord their God,’ namely, devotedly; ‘and David,’ that is, the son of God, Jesus Christ, and that this is the way it should be understood is clear through the Chaldean translation, among the Jews an authentic text, which has thusly: ‘After the children of Israel will return and seek’ the cult of their God and they will be obedient to the messiah, the son of David, their king.’ Hosea continues: ‘and they shall come in fear of the Lord,’ namely, to him whom they will reverence, ‘and to his goodness,’ namely, in fearing to turn away from that which is good in his sight. The time of the final conversion of the Jews is set then to take place ‘in the last days,’ that is, around the end of the world, and at that time this text from Hosea will be fulfilled.” See the appendix for Alonso’s Latin text.

<sup>102</sup> Book 18, chap. 53.

<sup>103</sup> McGinn reports on Vincent Ferrer: “On the basis of the proper interpretation of Scripture and a number of private revelations (including one he himself received in 1398), Vincent preached that Antichrist had been born in 1403.” *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years*, 178-79.

but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths.” The fifth sign is the disturbance of all spiritual leadership and earthly jurisdiction (Dan. 3:38),<sup>104</sup> and the sixth sign is the divine punishment through scourging and correction (Ezek. 7:12).<sup>105</sup> The seventh sign, which Alonso borrows from Bernardine of Siena’s *Evangelio Eterno* (Eternal Gospel/Evangel), is the cessation of the divine word from the minds of human beings, which equals the silence in heaven for a half an hour after the lamb opens the seventh seal, an event spoken of in Revelation 8:1.<sup>106</sup> The eighth sign is characterized by the doubt of faith as well as the spreading of error and deceptions, which are predicted in 1 Timothy 4:1-2: “In later times some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of speaking lies.” The ninth and final sign is the destruction of the church at the designated time, which John foretold in Revelation 12:1.<sup>107</sup> Reflecting upon these nine signs of the approaching coming of Antichrist from sacred scripture, Alonso comes to the alarming conclusion: “See and consider carefully, attentive reader, if perhaps one will discover at present some of the aforementioned signs in the wounded world, and hasten back most diligently to the strongest defense, Jesus Christ our Lord, who is ‘a strong tower against the face of the enemy’ (Ps. 60:3), in whose special defense the faith of Christians, is preserved inviolate forever.”<sup>108</sup>

This final comment indicates that Alonso saw himself living in the final age and that this awareness led him to write and preach with great fervor to remind Christians of the great danger they were now facing. His apocalyptic vision of the immediate future gives a sense of urgency to his task of preaching, writing, and calling for the establishment of an Inquisition. As wind stirs up an already burning fire, so too did

<sup>104</sup> Alonso continues: “[A]bout which Daniel 3:38 says: ‘At that time there will be no prince, nor prophet, nor prince among my people,’ who, namely, would observe the truth of life, justice, and doctrine.”

<sup>105</sup> Alonso continues: “[O]f which Ezekiel 7:12 speaks: ‘The time has come, the day is near, a day of tumult’ . . . let not the one who buys rejoice, and ‘who sells mourn, for wrath is upon all the multitude.’” See the appendix for Alonso’s Latin text.

<sup>106</sup> This is a borrowing from Bernardine of Siena in his *Eternal Evangel*. See McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years*, 180, on Bernardino’s shift in thinking in regard to Antichrist.

<sup>107</sup> Alonso continues: “[B]ecause a woman,’ that is, the church, escaped ‘into the wilderness, to the place where’ from God ‘for a time, and times, and half a time.’” Fol. CLXXXVrb.

<sup>108</sup> For the Latin text, see the appendix.

apocalyptic thought feed and give strength to the well-developed anti-Judaic position of Alonso de Espina.

*Evaluation of the Apocalyptic Thought of Alonso de Espina*

Alonso de Espina's presentation of the life and death of Antichrist covers, for the most part, a full picture of the final events of the end times. He presents the basics of the career of Antichrist: his birth and upbringing, his arrival in Jerusalem, the conversion of the Jews, the death of Antichrist, and finally the forty days of the refreshment of the saints and the end of the world. What is lacking in his presentation is any mention of the Joachimite apocalyptic vision. For example, Alonso does not speak of the three *stati* of salvation history, the seven ages of the church, or multiple Antichrists. There is no reading of contemporary events into his apocalyptic scenario—that is, there is no mention of persecutions against the evangelical life, multiple Antichrists, or an apocalyptic role for the papacy (a “heretical” or “angelic” pope); no involvement of political leaders in the end times (as earlier friars had regarded Frederick II); no mention of a “spiritual” church in battle with a “carnal” church; and no talk about an age of the Spirit or a replacement of the gospel in the new age. Neither does he give any role to Francis as the forerunner of the sixth age of renewal nor to the friars as “spiritual men,” as we find in Franciscan Joachism. None of the elements of the Franciscan-Joachite heritage, so strong in the early fourteenth century, find any place in the *Fortalitium Fidei*.

Concerning the Jews, Alonso mentions no possible positive role beyond what mainline apocalyptic theorists held (as we find in certain fourteenth-century Franciscan Joachites). In other words, there is nothing in Alonso's conception of the final age that will result in anything other than the final conversion of the Jews after they have been taken in by Antichrist. Even though he was aware of Joachim's writings,<sup>109</sup> a review of his sources (in Book III, consideration 12) indicates that Alonso did not use the Franciscan Joachism found in earlier mendicant writings like the *Lectura super Apocalypsim* of Peter John Olivi and the *Arbor vitae crucifixae* of Ubertino da Casale.<sup>110</sup> Alonso most likely sensed that he did

<sup>109</sup> Ginio, *De bello iudaeorum*, 220. In Book IV on the Muslims, Alonso quotes from the *Speculum Visionum* of Joachim of Fiore.

<sup>110</sup> Rather, in his sixth point, Alonso explicitly cites Bede, Isidore of Seville, Peter Comestor, Augustinus, and Franciscus de Maronis in the sixth point. In the seventh point, he cites Nicholas of Lyra, Pseudo-Methodius, and the *Pugio Fidei* of Ramon Martí.

not need to use these older materials—and we have no proof from the text that he knew of them—because his objective had been accomplished: the Jews were clearly shown to be linked with Antichrist, and their eventual conversion to Christianity was assured.

Also, Alonso may have disagreed with the other mendicants' overall representation of the Jews, which assigned them a relatively minor role among the enemies of the church and followers of Antichrist. Since he knew that endless speculation on the timing of Antichrist was presumptuous and led to serious error, he probably considered many of the ideas contained in Franciscan Joachimism mere speculation and therefore unnecessary to his own presentation of the end times.

Perhaps Alonso took the more careful approach of earlier friars like Nicholas of Lyra in his own interpretation of apocalyptic texts and his historical-social context. It seems very probable that Alonso learned from the mature thought of Bernardine of Siena—from whom he borrowed some of this twelfth chapter—that promoting the moral message of the Christian faith, which calls for conversion and reform, was more important than spending too much time and energy on the imminence of Antichrist.

Alonso's presentation of the final events was intended to scare or shock his listeners not only into reforming their own lives but also into becoming aware of the Jewish threat in their midst. Since the final events of the world were beginning to take place before his very eyes, Alonso felt compelled to find solutions to problems in the present world. One solution to the Jewish threat, besides the writing of the  *Fortalitium Fidei*  and his preaching mission in Spain, was the Inquisition, which, he argued, was needed to ferret out judaizing  *conversos* . The other solution was to expel the Jews from Spain, which would eventually take place in 1492. But overall, Alonso's objectives in this apocalyptic section were to move his audience to spiritual renewal and secondly to ensure them that those who threatened Christendom the most, the Jews, were, unlike

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In the eighth point, he cites Augustine, Arnaldus de Villa Nova, Franciscus Maronis, and Bernardus de Siena ( *Evangelio Eterno* ). It would appear that he was careful in his choice of writings he borrowed from for his own presentation. These sources may be the only ones he had available to him. We do not know if any of the works of the Spiritual Franciscans were available to him. They may have come to Alonso through the thought of Bernardino de Siena, whose own thought was greatly influenced by Peter John Olivi and Ubertino de Casale, though he does not mention them by name in his writings. As Mormando states: "This silence is most probably due to prudence, since the names of the long-dead Olivi and Ubertino were still shrouded in suspicion of herodoxy and schism."  *The Preacher's Demons* , 21.



their ancestors who remained in their stubbornness and unbelief, going to convert and embrace the true faith in the end. But only by an act of divine intervention during the final days would this take place.

*Alonso de Espina, Fortalitium Fidei, Book III, chapter 12:6-8*

**Quomodo Iudei recepturi sunt Antichristum et decipientur ab eo.** Sextus punctus est videre quomodo Iudei recipient Antichristum et decipientur ab eo. Erit enim Antichristus secundum sanctos nequissimus qui nascetur in Babilone sive generabitur de tribu Dan. Unde super illud Genesis xlix: *Fiat dan coluber in via.*<sup>111</sup> Beatus Isidorus super Pentateucho<sup>112</sup> dicit quod hoc est intelligendum de Antichristo et propterea illa tribus non annumeratur in numero signatorum Apocalypsis vii, super quo dicit Beda,<sup>113</sup> quod Dan pretermisit quia de illa tribu nasciturus est Antichristus, cuius adventus ut ait Apostolus, erit *secundum operationem Sathane*,<sup>114</sup> quia totum faciet instigante Dyabolo qui illum possidebit atque cooperante; nec tamen ita possidebit eum ex toto ut veniatur ei sicut humanitati divinitas in Christo; nec ita vexabit eum ut careat rationis iudicio alioquin non imputaretur ei quicquid ageret sicut furibundo. Comestor quidem dicit quod a principio conceptionis illius Dyabolus in utero matris eius descendet cuius virtute deinceps aletur puer et nascetur et adolescet.<sup>115</sup> Sed dicunt alii et forte melius et verius quod more ceterorum hominum a die conceptionis sue habebit angelum sui custodem usque ad annos discretionis, tunc extolletur supra omne quod dicitur esse Deus et angelorum presidio penitus deserto occupabit eum Dyabolus, qui ideo tunc soluendus dicitur, quia totam potestatem suam antiquam sibi relaxatam per illum exercet, et pro voluntate sua inclinabit eum ad malum sicut possessor ad libitum suum trahit iumentum et in cunctis malis artibus instruet eum. Cum ergo venerit iste impius Antichristus filii Israel qui ab Alexandro inter Montes Caspios in plaga septentrionali super oceanum ubi nunc est finis imperii magni Canis inter duo castra dicta Goth et Magoth fuerunt inclusi ut refert Magister Historiarum, et secundum Iosephum facto terremotu in conspectu principis montibus cadentibus super montes ibidem partim montibus partim muro indissolubili et portis ferreis obserati qui adhuc ibi dicuntur

<sup>111</sup> Gen. 49:16.

<sup>112</sup> Isidore on the Pentateuch, Migne P.L., 83:282-83.

<sup>113</sup> Bede, Migne P.L., 90:571-76.

<sup>114</sup> 2 Thess. 2:9.

<sup>115</sup> Peter Comestor, *Historia Scholastica*, Liber Danielis, cap. vi, p. 1454.

esse incantati, nudi incedentes carnibus crudis et arborum fructibus vivunt et in maximo numero consistunt, intantum ut secundum aliquos possent xxiiii regna implere, qui etiam quadam celesti virtute et montium portarum et murorum firmitate et imperatoris de Cathayo, scilicet magni Canis vel regine Amasonum milicia obserati exire nequeunt, excepto dumtaxat quia pro monstro ipse magnus canis aliquos de eis quinque portis apertis extrahit et mirabili gratia in exercitu suo secum ponit. Isto predicto Antichristo adiungentur virtute quorum regnabit et erit monarcha potentissimus. Et congregatis aliis Iudeis qui sunt per orbem dispersi veniens Hierosolimam circumcidet se dicens Iudeis se esse Christum ipsis in lege promissum Christum vero nostrum fuisse deceptorem et magum, omnes itaque Iudei accedentes et ei adherentes confluent ad ipsum, quia ipsi nimio desiderio fervent de adventu messie per quem expectant a captivitate liberari decepti signis et allekti promissis, et quia videbunt eum omni prosperitate et gloria clarescere regesque subiugare. Ideo illi longo excecato errore eum tanquam verum messiam suum recipient et ut Deum colent, et tanquam rex et dominus ab ipsis metuetur. Et propterea Apostolus ii ad Thessalonicenses ii,<sup>116</sup> vocat eum *hominem peccati, filium perditionis qui adversatur et extollitur supra omne quod dicitur Deus. Aut quod colitur ita ut in templo Dei ipse sedeat*, quod edificabit in Ierusalem secundum quosdam vel ut verius loquar secundum alios ipse se dicet templum Dei, *ostendens se tanquam ipse Deus sit*, hoc est quod dicit Beatus Augustinus, xx *De Civitate Dei*, xix capitulus, quod illud quod nos habemus de Antichristo *in templo Dei sedeat*, Greci habent *in templum Dei sedeat*, tanquam inquit Augustinus, ipse sit templum Dei, id est ecclesia, ex quo dicto accipitur argumentum quod Antichristus erit falsus Christianus et finget se virum ecclesiasticum ad accommodatius nocendum, quia in templum Dei, id est in modum ecclesie, ait Augustinus,<sup>117</sup> hoc idem vult Franciscus de Maronis in iiiii, dist. xlviii, q. ii,<sup>118</sup> allegans Augustinus ubi supra ipse etiam ut facilius Christianos et Iudeos ad ritum suum attrahit, diem Dominicum in favorem Christianorum, et diem Sabbati in favorem Iudeorum faciet custodiri, ut patet in Decretis de conse. di. iii, pervenit. Sic ergo patet quomodo Iudei decipientur ab Antichristo et quomodo recipient eum ut messiam suum et colent.

**Quomodo cognoscent se per Antichristum deceptos.** Septimus punctus est scire quomodo Iudei cognoscent se deceptos per Antichristum

<sup>116</sup> 2 Thess. 2:4.

<sup>117</sup> Augustine, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, XLVIII, 731.

<sup>118</sup> Francis of Mayronis, in *Libro Sententiarum* (Venice, 1520; reprint, Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1966).

et quomodo convertentur finaliter ad fidem catholicam. Notandum ergo quod postquam Iudei receperunt Antichristum tanquam messiam suum decepti ex his que dicta sunt in precedenti puncto, tunc mittet Deus ad eorum aliorum multorum conversionem Heliam et Enoch quod erit inter occultum adventum Antichristi qui est per nativitatem et manifestum eius adventum qui est per predicationem et apertam persecutionem. Tunc ergo predicti Helias et Enoch qui vivi adhuc in paradiso terrestri reservantur venient et manifeste se ostendent in Ierusalem et incipient publice predicare contra Antichristum destruentes eius processum et declarantes manifeste eius processum et declarantes manifeste eius deceptiones et astucias dyabolicas. Ipsumque coram omni populo arguent mendacem et fallacem ostendent et aperient thesauros absconditos Iudeis de veritate salutis fidei Iesu Christi, et sicut dicitur Malachie, ultimo: *Convertent corda patrum in filios*.<sup>119</sup> Glosa ad instructionem posteriorum de fide salvatoris in quem et ipsi crediderunt *et corda filiorum ad patres eorum*, glosa: qui percipient fidem quam illi habuerunt. Unde Iudei et Christiani pari religione tunc in Christum consentient. Sic ergo Iudei cognoscentes se fuisse deceptos in Christum credent pro ipso mori parati erunt ut dicit Methodius, capitulus xliiii, millia virorum ex omni tribu Israel pro Christo interfecti. De predicatione autem Helie et Enoch et facta conversione eorum scribitur Apocalypsis xi: *Dabo duobus testibus meis*, scilicet Helie et Enoch, *et prophetabunt*, id est predicabunt *diebus mille ducentis sexaginta*, glosa, id est tribus annis sicut ipse Christus predicavit; *amicti faccis*,<sup>120</sup> id est predicantes penitentiam et exemplum ostendentes; *hii sunt due olive*, id est Spiritu Sancto uncti *et duo candelabra*, id est dantes lumen aliis.<sup>121</sup> Tunc videns Antichristus se confusum et quod detecta est eius malicia exhibit in publicam persecutionem et occidet eos in Ierusalem, *et iacebunt corpora eorum in plateis . . . tribus diebus et tribus noctibus et dimidio*, quia nullus audebit sepelire corpora eorum metu Antichristi, ut quicumque viderint timeant eis conformari.<sup>122</sup> Occisores autem eorum leti erunt propter mortem eorum. Sed *post tres dies et dimidium* resurgent et occisores audient voces angelorum dicentium Helias et Enoch, *ascendite huc*, et ipsis videntibus *ascendent in celum in nube* et istud multum confirmabit Iudeos conversos ad fidem Christi per eos.<sup>123</sup> Sed et amplius confirmabuntur

<sup>119</sup> Malachi 4:6.

<sup>120</sup> The Latin Vulgate text has *amicti sacco*.

<sup>121</sup> Apocalypse 11:3-4.

<sup>122</sup> Apocalypse 11:8-9.

<sup>123</sup> Apocalypse 11:11-12.

per mortem Antichristi qui secundum quod dicit glosa super Apostolum tribus annis et dimidio regnabit. Unde Danielis xii: *Iuravit angelus per viventem in eternum quod in tempus*, scilicet unius anni, *et tempora*, scilicet duorum annorum, *et dimidium temporis*, id est dimidii anni, scilicet regnabit Antichristus, et idem dicit glosa, quod hoc spacio dicitur desolatio duratura sub Antichristo.<sup>124</sup> Quare autem ita modicum regnabit declaratur a Christo, Matthei xxiii, ubi dicitur quod *nisi breviati fuissent dies illi non fuisset salva omnis caro*, super quo dicit glosa quod hec tribulatio quanto ceteris gravior tanto erit brevitate mediocrior.<sup>125</sup> Et Gregorius quia enim et superbus et infirmus aspicit eos dies quos singulariter malus intulit misericorditer breviabit. In fine vero predicti temporis collocabit papilionem et solium suum Antichristus in Monte Oliveti, et tunc Dominus noster Iesus Christus, ut ait Ambrosius ostendet se ei et *interficiet eum spiritus oris sui*, id est virtute precepti sui.<sup>126</sup> Ipso nanque Iesu clamante in aere morietur Antichristus per Michaellem ut dicitur fulminatus, maxima quoque pars suorum ut legitur a Michaelle interficietur et hoc viso erit finalis et totalis conversio sive confirmatio conversionis Iudeorum ad fidem Christi. Et si queras utrum occiso Antichristo statim Christus veniet ad iudicium dico quod non sed secundum glosa Danielis xi, concedentur quadraginta dies ad refrigerium sanctorum et penitentiam subversorum. Quantum autem sit spacium inter istos quadraginta dies et finem mundi nemo scit. Sed quid fiet de ministris Antichristi qui remanserunt post eius mortem dicitur quod gaudebunt ducentes uxores et dicentes, “licet princeps noster mortuus sit tamen habemus pacem et prosperitatem,” et cum talia dixerint repentinus super eos veniet interitus, et extunc ecclesia usque ad finem mundi conquiescet pacificata, quia extunc fraudulentia et sevicia diaboli cessabunt. Visum est ergo quomodo Iudei cognoscent se deceptos et quomodo convertentur finaliter ad fidem Iesu Christi. Sed dicet aliquis nunquid hec finalis Iudeorum conversio fuit prophetis prenunciata dico quod sic. Et primo hec prenunciavit Isaias in capitulo x,<sup>127</sup> ubi sic habetur: *Si fuerit populus tuus, Israel, sicut arena maris, reliquie convertentur ex eo*, super quo dicit Targum: *Si fuerit populus tuus Israel multus sicut arena maris residuum quod neque peccavit vel quod penituerit de peccato convertetur*. Glosa rabi: Etiam *si fuerit Israel sicut arena maris* pre multitudine ego conflabo eos ut argentum

<sup>124</sup> Dan. 12:7.

<sup>125</sup> Matt. 24:22.

<sup>126</sup> 2 Thess. 2:8.

<sup>127</sup> Isa. 10:22.

et redigentur in modicum residuum. Residuum vero illius modicum convertetur ad bonum. Causa vero conversionis in finem mundi ponitur in Pereth Heleus, capitulus: Causa vero conversionis scriptum est Abacuc ii: *Quoniam adhuc visio ad terminum et loquetur ad finem et non mentietur si tardaverit rex*, scilicet messias *expecta eum quia veniens et non tardabit*. Et forte dices quod nos sumus expectantes et ipse non erit expectans immo sicut dictum est Isaie xxx: *Propterea expectat Dominus ut misereatur vestri*, exquo igitur ipse est expectans et nos sumus expectantes qui retardat regula iudicii est retardans, nos cur expectamus ad recipiendum mercedem sicut dictum est Isaia xxx: *Beati omnes qui expectant eum*.<sup>128</sup> Dixit rabi: Consummati sunt omnes termini vel fines et non pendet res nisi in penitentia et in bonis operibus. Rabi Eliazar dicit: Si Israel fecerint penitentiam redimentur, si autem non, non redimentur, sed Deus sanctus et benedictus constituet eis regem cuius statuta erunt durissima sicut aman et reducet eos ad bonum huiusque Thalmuth transumptive in *Pugione*, in parte finali, capitulo ultimo. Secundo introducitur Osee propheta qui in capitulo iii,<sup>129</sup> secundum expositionem magistri Nicolai de Lyra declarat duo, scilicet statum Iudeorum ab ascensione Christi usque ad finem seculi et eorum conversionem finalem. De primo dicit *dies multos expectabis me*, hoc dicit in signum quod plebs Iudaica expectaret messiam et ad huc spectat *non fornicaberis*, hoc dicit quia non serviunt idolis, *et non eris cum viro*, id est cum Christo a quo est modo separata propter suam incredulitatem, hic est ille vir de quo dicitur Hieremie xxxi: *Femina circumdabit virum gremio uteri sui*.<sup>130</sup> Sequitur: *Sed ego expectabo te*, loquitur in persona Dei qui expectat Iudeorum finalem conversionem,<sup>131</sup> consequenter hec declarat per prodigiale factum dicens: *Quia multos*, quasi dicat factum predictum designat *quod dies multos sedebunt*, id est manebunt filii Israel *sine rege*, id est *sine principe* sic videmus quod non habent de se regem nec principem sed alienis regibus et principibus serviunt *et sine sacrificio*, id est *sine altari*, quia non possunt sacrificare extra Ierusalem a qua sunt expulsi et templum destructum, *et sine ephot*, id est sine veste sacerdotali, quia sublati sacrificiis cessat usus vestis, *et sine theraphin*, id est imaginibus in quibus demones solent dare responsa, et apud Iudeos non sunt talia, ecce Iudeorum status ad ascensione Domini usque ad finem.<sup>132</sup> Sequitur secundum, scilicet Iudeorum finalis

<sup>128</sup> Isa. 30:18.

<sup>129</sup> Hosea 3:3-5.

<sup>130</sup> Jer. 31:22.

<sup>131</sup> Hosea 3:3.

<sup>132</sup> Hosea 3:4.

conversio: *Et post hec*, id est post Iudeorum abiectiōem et excecationem *revertentur filii Israel*, scilicet ab errore suo, *et querent Dominum Deum suum*, scilicet devote, *et David*, id est Dei Filium Iesum Christum, et quod sic debeat intelligi patet per translationem Caldaicam apud Hebreos authenticam que sic habet: *Post hec revertentur filii Israel et querent cultum Dei sui et obedient messie filio David regi suo*.<sup>133</sup> Sequitur in textu: *Et pavebunt ad Dominum*, scilicet ipsum reverendo *et ad bonum eius*, scilicet timendo declinare ab eo quod bonum est in oculis ipsius et subditur tempus, *in novissimo dierum*, id est circa finem mundi implebitur illud.<sup>134</sup> Patet ergo quomodo finalis conversio Iudeorum fuit a prophetis prenunciata ac etiam inter medium tempus.

**Utrum certis indiciis possit tempus Antichristi determinate cognosci.** Octavus et ultimus punctus huius considerationis ultime tercii libri est an tempus Antichristi quo Iudei sunt convertendi potest determinate cognosci. Respondetur quod presumptuosum est huiusmodi viatori quocunque modo hoc velle investigare cum ipsa suprema veritas hec voluerit nos nescire quod Beatus Augustinus, xviii *De Civitate Dei*, capitulus lii,<sup>135</sup> et declarans dicit de Antichristi tempore quando erit:

Importune omnino, queritur si etiam nobis hoc nosse prodesset, a quo melius quam ab ipso Deo magistro interrogantibus discipulis diceretur non enim silverunt inde apud eum sed a presente quesierunt dicentes, Domine si in tempore hoc restitues regnum Israel. At ille, non est inquit vestrum nosse tempora vel momenta que pater posuit in sua potestate, non utique illi de hora de die vel anno sed de tempore interrogaverunt quomodo istud accipere responsum. Frustra igitur annos qui remanent huic seculo computare vel diffinire conamur cum hoc scire non esse nostrum ab ore veritatis audiamus, quos tamen alii quadringentos. Alii etiam mille ab ascensione Domini usque ad eius ultimum adventum compleri posse dixerunt, quemadmodum autem quisque eorum astruat opinionem suam longum est demonstrare et non necessarium, coniecturis quippe utuntur humanis non ab eis aliquid certum de scripture canonice auctoritate profertur. Omnium enim de hac re calculantium digitos resoluit et quiescere iubet ille qui dicit non est vestrum nosse tempora vel momenta.

Hec ille.<sup>136</sup> Huic sententie Augustinus concordat falsitas eorum qui tempus certum determinaverunt cum tam supradicti quam etiam alii de quorum

<sup>133</sup> Hosea 3:5.

<sup>134</sup> Hosea 3:5.

<sup>135</sup> Actually the text is from chap. 53.

<sup>136</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XVIII, cap. LIII (sic) in Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, XLVIII, 652.

numero fuit Arnaldus de Villa Nova qui in tractatu quem fecit de fine seculi determinat quod Antichristus erat venturus in quartodecimo centenariio a nativitate Christi et patet quod sumus iam ultra per lx annos. Quidam etiam alius magnus predicator per orbem discurrens circa annum Domini Mccccx in sermone. Ecce hic positus est in ruinam declaravit tempore suo iam natum esse Antichristum per plures visiones et exempla cuius oppositum patet. Unus alius Parisiensis, conclusionem posuit affirmativam quod anno Domini Mccccviii et dimidio debebat apparere et publicari mundo, et anno Domini Mccclxxviii et dimidio erat nasciturus, patet manifeste in assignatione temporis adventus Antichristi omnes istos defecisse, et deficient quicumque alii presumpserint predicatum tempus assignare. Sed dicet aliquis diligens scire, licet tempus determinatum presumptuosum sit assignare, non tamen erit illicitum signa inquirere ut his cautiores reddantur fideles. Dico quod verum est non tamen debent inquire talia signa curiositate sciendi, sed animo seipsum et alios edificandi in timore Dei. Sed numquid aliqua talia inveniuntur certa propinqui eius adventus. Dico quod in sacra scriptura inveniuntur prenuntiata novem signa precipua propinquitatis adventus Antichristi. Primum signum est totius mundi generalis perturbacio de quo Daniel prophetavit in capitulo xii: *Veniet tempus quale non fuit ab illo tempore quo gentes ceperunt esse usque ad tempus illud*,<sup>137</sup> quod exponens Christus, Mattheum xxiii, dicit quod *erit tribulatio magna qualis non fuit ab inicio mundi*,<sup>138</sup> et ibidem declarando que erunt iste tribulationes, dicit quod *surget gens contra gentem et regnum adversus regnum, pestilentie et fames et terremotus erunt per loca, terroresque de celo*, etc.<sup>139</sup> Secundum signum est scisma ecclesie crudelissimum, de quo dicit Apostolus ii ad Thessalonicenses ii: *Qui tenet nunc teneat donec de medio fiat*,<sup>140</sup> super quo Beatus Augustinus, xx *De Civitate Dei* capitulus xix,<sup>141</sup> “dixerit,” quid dicit, scilicet Apostolus, “me prorsus fateor ignorare,” et ibi recitat Augustinus hominum suspensiones circa istud, quidam enim dicunt ipsum Paulum voluisse hoc dicere de Romano imperio ad vitandum calumniam. Alii autem credunt Neronem Antichristum futurum et resurrecturum. Alii autem nondum mortuum sed occultatum donec suo tempore reveletur et restituatur in regnum, dicit tamen ibi Augustinus, quod mira est sic opinantium temeritas. Sed

<sup>137</sup> Dan. 12:1

<sup>138</sup> Matt. 24:21.

<sup>139</sup> Matt. 24:7.

<sup>140</sup> 2 Thess. 2:7.

<sup>141</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, in *Corpus Christianorum*, Series Latina, XLVIII, 731-32.

istud dictum difficile ibidem pertractans sic dicit non absurde intelligitur: *Qui tenet, scilicet imperium, teneat donec de medio fiat*, id est tollatur de medio per Antichristum ipsum imperium, vel aliter inquit: *Donec de medio ecclesie exeat ministerium iniquitatis, quod scilicet, nunc est occultum*.<sup>142</sup> Ex prima autem expositione accipitur argumentum quod Antichristus pugnabit contra Romanum imperium, et tunc oportet quod ille imperator sit fidelissimus qui resistit ei. Ex secunda sequitur quod malum illius persecutionis orietur ab ecclesia ut infra ipsam sit prius pugna intestina. Has duas illationes ponit Franciscus Maronis in suis *Floribus de Civitate Dei*, capitulo quo supra. Et predicta malicia nihil aliud videtur esse nisi scisma gravissimum in ecclesia Dei sive discessio a fide. Istud est ergo signum precipuum quod debet prevenire Antichristum, iuxta illud ii ad Thessalonicenses ii: *Nisi venerit discessio primum et revelatus fuerit homo peccati filius perditionis*, etc.,<sup>143</sup> quod exponunt doctores de discessione a fide. Quod autem sit istud signum manifestatum eius adventus patet quia postquam dixit: *Qui tenet nunc teneat donec de medio fiat*, statim subiungit: *Et tunc revelabitur ille iniquus*.<sup>144</sup> Tercium signum est multiplicatio viciorum de quo Christus ait Mattheus xxiii, et quia habundabit iniquitas refrigescet charitas multorum, et Apostolus dicit ii ad Thimotheum, iii capitulus: *In novissimis temporibus instabunt tempora periculosa, et erunt omnes seipsos amantes, cupidi, elati, blasphemi, parentibus inobedientes, ingrati, scelesti, sine affectione, sine pace, criminales incontinentes, immites, sine benignitate, proditores, protervi, tumidi, voluptatum amatores magis quam Dei, habentes speciem quidem pietatis, virtutem eius abnegantes*.<sup>145</sup> Quartum signum est neglectio sive contemptus sane doctrine, de quo ii ad Thimotheum iii: *Erit enim tempus cum sanam doctrinam non sustinebunt sed ad sua desideria coacervabunt sibi magistros prurientes auribus et a veritate quidem auditus avertent, ad fabulas autem convertentur*.<sup>146</sup> Quintum signum est perturbatio omnis prelature spiritualis et terrenalium iurisdictionis, de quo Danielis iii: *In tempore illo non erit princeps, neque propheta neque dux in populo meo*, qui scilicet observet veritatem vite iusticie et doctrine.<sup>147</sup> Sextum signum est vindicatio divinalis per flagellum et correctionem, de quo Ezechielis vii: *Venit tempus prope est dies occisionis qui emit non letetur, et qui vendit non lugeat, quia ira super*

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<sup>142</sup> 2 Thess. 2:8.

<sup>143</sup> 2 Thess. 2:3.

<sup>144</sup> 2 Thess. 2:8.

<sup>145</sup> 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

<sup>146</sup> 2 Tim. 4:3.

<sup>147</sup> Dan. 3:38.



*omnem populum*.<sup>148</sup> Septimum signum erit cessatio verbi divini quo mentes obscure et tenebrose ad verum lumen gratie reducuntur, deviantibus ostenditur salutis via et errantibus manifesta sit semita veritatis. Hec omnia appropinquante tempore Antichristi ob defectum divini verbi de mentibus hominum disperibunt, sicut notat Beatus Bernardus, in suo *Evangelio Eterno*, in sermone, Non in solo pane vivit homo. Allegans illud Apocalypsis viii: *Et cum agnus aperuisset septimum sigillum factum est silentium in celo quasi media hora*.<sup>149</sup>

*Septimum* nanque *sigillum*, ut dicit septimum est iudicium in ecclesia dandum. Quidnam per celum, nisi ecclesia Dei exprimitur, cuius equidem multitudo per conversationem celestis esse deberet. Quid hoc *silentium* nisi defectio verbi Dei. Nam et multi appareant predicare, verbum tamen Dei adulterantes, seipsos predicant, non Dominum Iesum Christum. Sed notanter hoc *silentium* merito *media hora* fieri dicitur, quia inter perfectionem institutionis Christi et sue radiose doctrine et vite et difformitatem aversionis et diabolice cecitatis, qua avertet Antichristus multitudinem Christianorum post flagitia variis modis, quasi medius status est, cum lumine veritatis silentium imponitur, et vox ignorantie per facti evidentiam incipit exclamare, sicut in Genesis, xviii capitulo, de Sodomitis et Gomorrianis scriptum est: *Clamor Sodomorum et Gomorreorum multiplicatus est*.<sup>150</sup> Gomorra enim, cecitas, et Sodoma, pecus silens, interpretatur. Ex hac nanque abisso ignorantie Dei et malicie mundi successum sumet et prosperabitur Antichristus, sicut Apocalypsis xi capitulo, scriptum est: *Bestia*, id est, bestialis et crudelis Antichristus *ascendet de abyso*, id est prosperabitur et successum habebit ex ignorantia mundi, qui ve abissus poterit appellari, quia mundus tunc propter defectum divini verbi ignorantia plenus erit in cunctis bonis.<sup>151</sup> Propterea Iob xx capitulo, ait: *Dicit abissus*, id est prefata ignorantia: *Non est in me*, lumen scilicet alicuius necessarie veritatis.<sup>152</sup>

Hec ibi.<sup>153</sup> Octavum signum est dubitatio in fide et pullulatio erroris et deceptionum, de quo dicitur i ad Thimotheum i: *In novissimis temporibus discedent quidem a fide attendentes spiritibus erroris et doctrinis demoniorum in hypocrisi loquentium mendacium*.<sup>154</sup> Nonum signum est destructio ecclesie ad

<sup>148</sup> Ezek. 7:12.

<sup>149</sup> Apocalypse 8:1.

<sup>150</sup> Gen. 18:20.

<sup>151</sup> Rev. 11:7.

<sup>152</sup> Job 28:14.

<sup>153</sup> Alonso borrows from Bernardine of Siena here. "Dominica Prima in Quadragesima in Mane" (Sermone IX) from S. Bernardini Senensis, *Opera Omnia*, Tomus III *Quadragesimale de Evangelio Aeterno* (Florence: Quaracchi, 1956), 148-49.

<sup>154</sup> 1 Tim. 4:1-2.

tempus, de quo propherauit Johannes Apocalypsis xii, quod *mulier*, scilicet ecclesia fugit *in desertum*, *ubi alitur* a Deo *per tempus, et tempora et dimidium temporis*.<sup>155</sup> Hec novem signa propinqui adventus Antichristi ex sacris scripturis colligere potui. Videat et contempletur diligens lector si forte mundum in presenti inveniet aliquibus de predictis signis vulneratum, et recurrat diligentissime ad fortissimum defensorem Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum, qui est *turris fortitudinis a facie inimici* cuius singulari presidio fides Christianorum inviolabilis sine fine perseveret.<sup>156</sup> Explicit liber tercius.

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<sup>155</sup> Apocalypse 12:1, 12:14.

<sup>156</sup> Ps. 60:4.

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